

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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# The Good Samaritan Goes Overseas

FRANCIS B. SAYRE

## I

**F**OR the past thirty years we have been living through one of the outstanding and critical periods of world history. We have witnessed the ending of an era and the breaking up of the comfortable easy world in which we lived prior to 1914. Kingdoms and governments have been overturned. Fundamental beliefs and underlying philosophies in large areas of the world have been shattered and displaced. It has been a generation of kaleidoscopic change and breakdown and conflict. And now, weary of turmoil, heartsick of the welter of suffering all around us, men are turning their faces to the future, as is just and right, and wondering how to build a better world.

In every country men want to build a better world. The problem is, How? We cannot see a clear pathway ahead. Discordant counsels confuse us. Many peoples are growing discouraged and wondering which way to turn.

As such a time the great fundamentals of the Christian faith stand out like beacon lights to guide humanity forward. If we truly believe in those fundamentals we cannot lose our sense of direction or miss the way forward. The details are still indistinct, but the general direction is unmistakable.

In the international field the Christian position is clear. The nineteenth-century notion of a world of isolated, self-seeking sovereign nations, each bent on gaining political and economic mastery over its rivals and competitors, killing and robbing whenever expedient in order to gain selfish power, is not compatible with the Christian conception of world brotherhood. It led to the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, each struggling to outarm and outstrip the other, and to the explosion of 1914. It led to the first World War, and from that into the second World War. It has led to breakdown, frustration and utter disaster. If we are to build a civilization that will survive there is only one foundation possible—and that is the Christian way of brotherhood.

What does that mean in terms of present-day realities? In a world as closely knit together as ours has become, it means men and women of

different races and different nationalities learning to work together shoulder to shoulder for the common ends of humanity. Peoples will begin thinking, not in terms of a master race or the protection of national sovereignty, but of how to gain for all mankind security and lasting peace.

It means a way of life based upon individual freedom, upon equality of opportunity, upon equal justice to the weak as to the strong. These, indeed, are the fundamental objectives for which we are fighting against Axis forces today.

To win this way of life, pious hopes and Fourth of July oratory will not be sufficient. Very clearly the first practical step for attaining these objectives must be the winning of the present war. Should we fail in this our whole economic system would have to be regimented from top to bottom to achieve military objectives. There could be no possibility of any kind of freedom of enterprise. There could be no possibility of individual liberty or stable peace.

But it is equally clear that the winning of the war will not be enough. After the military victories have been won the more difficult part of the task will begin. And at the very threshold of the enormous work of rebuilding and reconstruction and regeneration, we face a preliminary problem that itself is of staggering proportions—the problem of bringing emergency relief and rehabilitation to peoples enslaved by Axis tyranny and destitute through Axis cruelty—of keeping them alive and assisting them to their feet so that they can once more take a hand in the world's work and help in the building of the New World for which we are fighting.

## II

Never before in all history has humanity faced on a world-wide scale such stark distress and gripping destitution. In four and a half years of fighting in Europe and six and a half years of fighting in Asia, the Axis has overrun thirty-five nations, in which were living over five hundred millions of people. The economies of whole nations have been disrupted and exploited. Entire races have been driven into exile and despair.

The problem of meeting this appalling need is too great and too complex to permit solution by any single private agency or group of private agencies. It is too gigantic to be successfully met even by any government acting alone. The problem is world-wide in its scope and it can be met only through international organization and far-reaching co-operation.

At the outset an Interallied Committee on Postwar Requirements

was organized in London in September, 1941. After Pearl Harbor had swept the United States into the war, the United States took the lead. Together with Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China, we proceeded to draft an agreement for the setting up of a United Nations Administration to meet the problem of civilian relief in the liberated territories. On November 9, 1943, in the East Room of the White House delegates from forty-four nations, representing some eighty per cent of the people of the world, attached their signatures to the historic document. It was a new adventure. Never before had the peoples of the East and West, the North and the South, met together to pool their resources and to organize themselves upon an international scale to help bind up the wounds of war, to assist in feeding the hungry and to help care for the sick and destitute.

On the day following the signing, the delegates of the forty-four nations, their advisers and assistants, several hundred strong, took a special train to Atlantic City; and there for the following three weeks we set to work hammering out plans and creating an organization to translate the dream into concrete reality. It was not easy. Men from the four corners of the world were there, of different race and creed, reflecting widely conflicting viewpoints. We did not see always eye to eye. But we were determined to get on with the business, and all of us felt the urgency of the task. We could not afford to let minor conflicts impede the work. We ironed out all differences and went forward. We were learning the meaning of what some call international co-operation and others, brotherhood. There is no other foundation upon which stable peace can be built.

### III

To the uninitiated, playing the part of the good Samaritan to the liberated countries seems like a delightfully easy and simple job. In truth under present conditions meeting the problem of relief is a task as baffling and difficult as it is worth while.

The fact is that there is not nearly enough food or clothing or other essentials on hand today in other parts of the world to supply in full the needs of the liberated areas. Also, so long as the war is making heavy demands on shipping, there will not be nearly enough space to transport all the supplies that could justifiably be used. Except for wheat, almost everything of vital consequence for relief and rehabilitation is in short supply.

That means that there is no possibility of going out into the markets

of the world today and buying goods as needed. The necessary supplies do not exist in large enough quantities.

The time factor adds to the difficulties. The supplies must be on hand and ready to ship when the German and Japanese armies are driven out. The supplies cannot be bought over the counter. In most cases raw materials must first be allocated and procured, and after this the processing or production may require many weeks and months. If, for instance, garments are needed, it may take months to procure the necessary cotton or wool, more months to make the necessary textiles, and still more months to have the needed garments made. If seeds are needed, these must first be produced, and Nature cannot be hurried in the process. If agricultural tools are needed, the steel must first be allocated and then procured, and after that the tools must be manufactured. And always civilian needs must wait upon and be subordinated to military needs.

Military needs infinitely complicate the situation. Our primary job is to win the war. The Army and the Navy must have first call on all foodstuffs and raw materials and supplies to transport. UNRRA can never assemble goods for relief and rehabilitation stockpiles in competition with the military. In fact, UNRRA must allow the military whenever necessary to deplete its own stockpiles.

On the other hand, civilian relief and rehabilitation is part of the military job. The United Nations' armies must prove welcome deliverers. The Army must preserve the loyalty of liberated populations so that supply lines will be safe from interruption and may be guarded with minimum forces. The Army must prevent the outbreak of disease or epidemics behind the lines for the protection of its own troops. We must get liberated areas at the earliest possible moment back onto their feet and producing so as to lessen the strain on military supply lines. For an initial period the Army itself undertakes full responsibility for civilian relief.

As long as an acute shortage of world supplies continues it must be part of the task of UNRRA to assure an equitable distribution of world relief supplies to and among the liberated areas. Without international control those areas which are liberated first, or those whose governments possess foreign exchange sufficient to enable them to go into the markets of the world and buy up procurable supplies, will secure more than their equitable share. This would make it impossible for the later liberated or poorer areas to secure enough for minimum vital needs. In other words, if actual starvation is to be prevented in some countries, an uncontrolled

scramble in world markets for scarce supplies must at all costs be prevented until conditions of trade, production and consumption are more normal.

To sum up, the job of administering world relief and rehabilitation is obviously one of international scope. No one or even a few nations alone could possibly meet the need. Goods must be made available and necessary supplies planned for and procured all over the world. The preparation and co-ordination of essential requirements for each of the liberated areas and the planned allocations for each against available world supplies is also a task impossible of achievement except by international machinery. Again, it is only through international control that relief goods in short supply can be equitably apportioned according to need rather than according to ability to pay. Through international machinery and through close and understanding international co-operation alone can the problem be met.

#### IV

The authority of UNRRA stems from the Council, composed of one representative for each of the forty-four United Nations and those associated with them in the war. The Council is the policy-making body which meets not less than twice a year. At Atlantic City we held the first meeting of the Council and there set the course for the new Administration.

The executive and administrative work of UNRRA is in the hands of a director general, elected by the Council. His is a position of keystone importance; for upon his shoulders rests the responsibility of getting the job done—of preparing programs for the emergency relief of civilian populations in liberated areas, of co-ordinating and arranging for the procurement and assembly of the necessary supplies, and of arranging for the distribution of supplies and services. By universal accord the representatives of every one of the forty-four member nations chose for this supremely important position Herbert H. Lehman, former Governor of the State of New York—a man of tested ability, free of political and personal ambition and consecrated to the cause of humanity.

At Atlantic City the Council brought into being several important standing committees—a Central Committee to determine emergency policies when the Council itself is not sitting, a Committee on Supplies, a Committee on Financial Control and two regional committees, one for Europe and one for the Far East. These, together with other technical standing committees, will assist and advise the director general on matters of policy. They are already functioning and at work.

## V

Much of the discussion at Atlantic City centered around the scope and the nature of the tasks to be undertaken.

In the first place, the important tasks of long-range reconstruction or development fall outside the scope of UNRRA. We must be realistic and look facts in the face. We must not promise the impossible. We hope for a better world. But the longer-range work of building one is not the task of UNRRA. UNRRA has been created to do only an emergency job, by providing as promptly and effectively as possible, the basic needs of victims of war for food, fuel, clothing, emergency shelter, public health and medical care.

With such relief must go a limited amount of rehabilitation. Obviously liberated areas must not be made objects of charity. They will want to get on their own feet. The fundamental objective of UNRRA is to assist them *to help themselves*, so that they will no longer need relief. Concretely this means that as soon as an area is liberated UNRRA must assist the people where necessary to obtain the means of planting and tending and harvesting their first crops, and must assist them to repair their machines and to find the raw materials necessary to produce essential relief goods which would otherwise have to be sent to them from outside.

Another task of great difficulty and magnitude confronting UNRRA will be the problem of displaced persons. Today there are in Europe some twenty million people, in Asia perhaps double that number, driven from their homes and their workshops by Axis tyranny or by the cruelties of war. Some are wandering and homeless, others imprisoned in concentration camps and still others impressed in Axis slave gangs. Seldom if ever has the world faced so staggering a problem of human woe. Many of them are weakened by hunger and riddled with disease. Without adequate medical and sanitary control the sudden release of such a group from concentration camp and labor gang might spread typhus and similar epidemics throughout Europe. One of the major tasks facing us at the conclusion of the war will be to feed and clothe and care for these armies of displaced men, women and children; to establish adequate registration facilities; to work out and help to administer effective sanitary and health regulations for preventing the spread of epidemic and disease, and to assist in getting these homeless, disheartened wanderers back to their homes or other places of abode. At Atlantic City the Council recommended that the director gen-



eral, in concert with the member governments, should "plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of orderly and effective measures for the return to their homes of prisoners, exiles and other displaced persons."

The problem of financing relief measures was considered at length at the Council meeting in Atlantic City. For more than two years various governments have been at work estimating and studying the minimum needs and requirements of the people of the liberated countries. The Council at Atlantic City unanimously recommended that "each member government whose home territory has not been occupied by the enemy shall make a contribution for participation in the work of the Administration, approximately equivalent to one per cent of the national income of the country for the year ending June 30, 1943." This would mean a total sum set aside for relief and rehabilitation in the liberated territories amounting to between two and two and a half billion dollars.

Those member governments whose home territory has been invaded, having already contributed far more than their share in lives and blood and sacrifice, should, it was agreed, contribute to UNRRA whatever they could and not be asked for a one per cent contribution. As a matter of fact, the people of the liberated countries probably can, and will surely want to, produce themselves the great bulk—perhaps ninety per cent—of the necessary relief supplies. They will also, whenever able, pay for such goods as are brought in from the outside. On the other hand they, with all the others, will want to share in meeting the administrative expenses of UNRRA, and this they will be asked to do.

## VI

It will be for Congress to determine the extent and the nature of the United States' contribution to the support of UNRRA. Last November a joint resolution was introduced in Congress authorizing the appropriation to the President of such sums, not to exceed \$1,350,000,000, as the Congress may determine, for participation by the United States in the work of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. This resolution was passed in the House on January 25 by a vote of 338 to 54 and in the Senate on February 17 by a vote of 47 to 14. It now remains for specific appropriation bills to be passed by Congress in accordance with the authorization contained in the joint resolution.

The United States' share of the cost of UNRRA, if the Atlantic City

one per cent recommendation be followed, will amount to approximately \$1,350,000,000. This would constitute, not a recurring annual contribution, but the United States' share of the total amount now set aside for relief and rehabilitation. Although the amount may seem large, in fact it is no more than the war is costing us every five days. If through relief and rehabilitation, which the military deems a vitally necessary part of its work, we can shorten the war by five days, the cost of UNRRA from a purely investment standpoint will be thoroughly justified.

The cost of any possible alternative course would be infinitely greater. During and after the first World War, when we sought to meet the problem of European civilian relief singlehanded, the United States expended for relief some two and a half billion dollars. If, on the other hand, we follow a policy of ignoring the problem and doing nothing, the inescapable result will be to protract and extend the economic paralysis of the invaded areas following their liberation. This would cost the United States literally hundreds of millions of dollars; for the United States cannot remain prosperous in the face of a bankrupt Europe and Asia. American mills and American farms are too dependent upon foreign markets and available foreign purchasing power.

Furthermore, if we do not succeed in getting the wheels of business and industry turning again in Europe and Asia as quickly as possible after each area is liberated, we will weaken our resources, protract the war longer than necessary and increase the losses of our fighting men. After the war, hunger and disease and suffering, if unrelieved, will lead to black despair; chaos and rebellion and renewed fighting will inevitably follow. We shall reap the whirlwind.

There is indeed no other practical and sane course open to us except to share with other nations the task of helping the liberated peoples back onto their feet.

## VII

The policies laid down at Atlantic City made certain fundamentals clear. First, at the forefront of all our effort must be the winning of the war. All the activities of UNRRA, therefore, must further—not impede—this end. Scarce supplies and shipping tonnage must be carefully controlled and allocated by the international control agencies in such a way as fully to meet the needs and requirements of the armed forces.

Second: There will always be the danger of relief and rehabilitation being used as an instrument for gaining political or social or sectarian ends.

This danger we cannot escape; but we can and we must frankly recognize and fight it unyieldingly. Governor Lehman from the very outset has set his face strongly against the use of relief for any but humanitarian ends. At Atlantic City it was unanimously agreed "that at no time shall relief and rehabilitation supplies be used as a political weapon and no discrimination shall be made in the distribution of relief supplies because of race, creed or political belief."

Third: UNRRA is not set up merely as a charity enterprise. It is neither a Lady Bountiful nor a Santa Claus. It is organized to bring help to people in vital need and to proportion the help to the need, irrespective of ability to pay. Some western European nations are the fortunate possessors of substantial amounts of foreign exchange. They can afford to pay for relief and rehabilitation supplies. They will be expected to do so, in order that the strictly limited resources of UNRRA may be stretched to the utmost in meeting the limitless need. "It shall be the policy of the Administration," declared the Council at Atlantic City, "not to deplete its available resources for the relief and rehabilitation of any area whose government is in a position to pay with suitable means of foreign exchange." Furthermore, the Council recommended that "insofar as possible all expenses of the Administration within a liberated area shall be borne by the government of such area, and shall be paid in local currency made available by the government of the area or derived from the proceeds of the sale of supplies."

Fourth: It will be the constant policy of UNRRA to avoid duplication of effort and of resources by using wherever possible existing national or international agencies for the work of allocating, procuring or transporting supplies. To quote from another Atlantic City resolution: "The Director General, after consultation, when necessary, with the appropriate intergovernmental agency, will make use, wherever possible, of the established national agencies concerned with the procurement, handling, storage and transport of supplies."

UNRRA welcomes and will certainly want to use the strength and the skill and the experience which nongovernmental relief agencies can bring to the task before us. The creation of UNRRA in no sense means that private agencies will be denied a real place in the relief program abroad. Obviously, it would be impossible for any private agency or group of private agencies through their own resources to meet the vast problems of mass hunger and devastation abroad. On the other hand, UNRRA cannot nor

would it want to undertake all the diversified welfare services that will be required as countries are liberated. UNRRA is looking forward to a partnership of interest with the private agencies.

The private agencies have never before faced a task of such world-wide scope. The work that lies ahead presents to them a challenge—to discover along what concrete lines each private agency with its peculiar resources and experience can make the most effective contribution to the whole, and how all serving in a spirit of selflessness can best integrate their work so as to become a unified part of the great civilian relief work of the United Nations.

### VIII

Christianity is not merely a dream or a beautiful vision. It is a way of life, waiting for practical realization in deeds and in everyday action. Without that it will wither. Now in these tremendous times of struggle and change, when the shape of human life and destiny for decades to come is being hammered out, if we are to have a Christian world in the years ahead, Christians must take a hand in shaping events.

UNRRA today constitutes one of the most promising new adventures in practical international co-operation. This forward-looking constructive attempt to solve through international collaboration the problem of civilian relief and rehabilitation has a significance extending far beyond the field of relief. The hope of future peace depends upon how far the nations of the world can learn to work co-operatively for common ends—can learn the give and take which all genuine co-operation involves for the sake of gaining larger, more far-reaching objectives. UNRRA constitutes the immediate and practical way forward in establishing the only kind of foundations upon which stable peace and human progress can rest. In spite of the difficulties and complexities of the problem, backed by the solid support of the peoples of the world, we shall go forward, God willing, and build for a peace that will endure.

In these days of fire and destruction, Christianity has a rare chance of coming into its own again. That will depend upon what Christians make of the present opportunity. Nineteen hundred years ago Christianity became a flaming power through the courage and dauntless activity of a handful of disciples, who dared set themselves against the evil and the materialism and the selfishness prevailing in the seemingly impregnable Roman Empire of their day. Today true Christians face a challenge not unlike that of the first century.

# The Dark Night of the Soul

GEORGIA HARKNESS

**T**HE *Dark Night of the Soul* is the title of an important but now little read book of the sixteenth century by the Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross. It deals with an experience which is not that of a remote time or place or special degree of saintliness, but which besets the path of the earnest Christian in every age. Its theme is the sense of spiritual desolation, loneliness, frustration and despair which grips the soul of one who, having seen the vision of God and been lifted by it, finds the vision fade and the presence of God recede.

This experience is a common theme in mystical literature. Not only St. John but his teacher and comrade in spiritual reform, St. Teresa of Avila, describes with great vividness the soul's bereftness during periods of struggle to recapture the lost sense of God's nearness. Before their time in the fourteenth century John Tauler, St. Catherine of Siena and Henry Suso (whose victory over it led him to go down in history as the Blessed Henry Suso) had to fight such darkness. In the seventeenth, George Fox's "great openings" are not to be understood with any clarity except as they are viewed against the backdrop of his great depressions, and John Bunyan had his own battles with the powers of darkness. A detailed and ingenuous self-revelation is to be found in Madame Guyon's *Autobiography* and her *Spiritual Torrents*. Times of spiritual "dryness" were apparently the normal expectancy of most of the mystics, and are treated with much understanding and helpful counsel by the author of the *Imitation of Christ*. As *accidie*, or spiritual torpor, the experience was common enough to be regarded by the medieval church as one of the seven deadly sins, the deadliness of which has been obscured in translation by the colorless and inaccurate *sloth*.

An experience so common to persons of religious sensitivity in the past has its modern counterpart, for the currents of the soul run in much the same channels at all periods. Jeremiah and the author of Job knew what the dark night of the soul meant. Their determined, but by no means continually joyous, spiritual pilgrimage was full of battles that must ever be refought. I believe it to be neither blasphemy nor strained exegesis to say that Jesus knew its meaning when He cried out from the cross, "My

God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Any Christian who has tried in vain to put his trust in God, praying earnestly for assurance of God's presence and finding one's own words returning empty, knows something of what the "dark night" means.

There are many such, today as at all times. But when one examines the modern literature of religious therapy and psychology of religion, one finds a surprising vacuum in regard to this experience. Much has been written on conversion; there are excellent devotional manuals and books on prayer; a useful literature on the relations of religion to health is being created. The common assumption in such writings is that God is always available to the penitent and surrendered soul. This is what the sufferer wants to believe, but his suffering becomes the more poignant because his experience does not validate it.<sup>1</sup>

It will be profitable to look more closely at the phenomena of the "dark night," then offer some suggestions as to its causes.

The most characteristic note in all descriptions of this unhappy state is that of a frustrated quest for the divine Presence. One who has found in God precious companionship desires to go on to more intimate spiritual fellowship and finds, to his great dismay, that he seems to be further from God than before. To some of the mystics this experience came with sudden shock; in others there was a gradual breaking up of an earlier equilibrium, with "dry times" of increasing duration and frequency encroaching on the life of devotion and sapping its power. The resulting privation threw the soul into confusion, turmoil and deep distress.

It is important to distinguish this state from that of unregenerate indifference. When one has made no serious attempt to find God, he may be either callously apathetic or acutely unhappy through lack of inner stability, but he does not "lie awake in the dark and weep for his sins." The devout soul in the "dark night" not only weeps for his sins, but weeps because he is unable to find in God the release from them that he formerly thought he had. It is also to be distinguished from atheism, for the mystics who came through this experience and looked backward to tell about it give no evidence of having lost their faith in God. What they doubted

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<sup>1</sup>The best treatment of the "sick soul" is in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, but it contains only one casual reference to spiritual dryness and no distinction is drawn between the apathy of the unconverted and the aridity of the Christian seeker. In Boisen's *The Exploration of the Inner World* there is an excellent analysis of many of its phenomena as exemplified in the conversion struggles of Fox and Bunyan. The only modern treatment I have been able to find which deals with the "dark night" as a distinctive experience of the converted Christian is a chapter in Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*. To this I am indebted both for interpretation and for some of the sources quoted.



was not God's existence or His grace, but their own ability either to find His presence or to merit His mercy.

A second and closely related characteristic is a union of self-distrust with self-condemnation. "It is an amazing thing," says Madame Guyon, "for a soul that believed herself to be advanced in the way of perfection, when she sees herself thus go to pieces all at once."<sup>2</sup> St. Catherine of Siena, tormented by visions of sin that appalled her, speaks graphically of "digging up the root of self-love with the knife of self-hatred."<sup>3</sup> Many a minister, if he is honest with himself, finds an echo in his soul to the question Suso found God putting to him: "Where is then your resignation? Where is that equal humor in joy and in tribulation which you have so lightly taught other men to love?"<sup>4</sup> The literature dealing with the "dark night" reflects relatively little tendency to put the blame for trouble on outward circumstances, much self-accusation and disgust with one's self for lack of Christian fortitude. Though this is doubtless a form of emotional insecurity not unmixed with self-pity, it is not the self-exonerating, alibi-seeking insecurity of the unregenerate.

A third dominant trait is loneliness, which means the bitterness of isolation both from God and man. Bereft of divine companionship, the soul cries out for human fellowship. But this, too, is denied. Partly because the experience makes the sufferer irritable and "odd," partly because his increased self-centeredness makes him abnormally sensitive, his friends withdraw. They do not understand him or he them, and he suffers acutely from imagined gibes and slights. Thus he cuts himself off from fellowship just when he needs it most.

A fourth note, following inevitably from the others, is spiritual impotence. This does not mean, for the most part, yielding to overt temptation. The mystics even in their darkest hours were usually able to resist the Devil when he came in the form of fleshly lusts. What they could not master was the temptation to spiritual weariness and discouragement. They could not rise to the challenge to "be not weary in well-doing," for the soul was already faint and saw no prospect of reaping. Almost invariably, a soul caught in the "dark night" thinks that it will never emerge. Madame Guyon speaks for many (and points to an important avenue of release) when she says: "The good appeared to me evil; and—that which is ter-

<sup>2</sup> *Spiritual Torrents*, Part I, Ch. vii, Sec. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Dialogue*, Ch. lxiii.

<sup>4</sup> *Little Book of Eternal Wisdom*, Ch. xl.

rible—it seemed to me that this state must last forever. For I did not believe it to be a state, but a true falling away. For if I had been able to believe that it was a state, or that it was necessary or agreeable to God, I should not have suffered from it at all.”<sup>5</sup>

Various evil moods ensue, not the least of which is the exasperation of helplessness. St. Teresa, saint though she was, speaks language understood by the rest of us when she says, “The Devil then sends so offensive a spirit of bad temper that I think I could eat people up!” Many who record such spiritual turmoil were victims of ill health, though whether the physical accompaniment was cause or effect it is hard to say. Not infrequently there is evidence of loss of intellectual power and grasp of worldly affairs. In short, the futility which the saints feared often passed from imagination to reality as the state progressed.

Though these phenomena may be analyzed point by point they beset the whole man, and cannot be understood apart from their corroding influence on the total personality. A paragraph from St. John of the Cross describes graphically the acute agony and hopelessness of the person caught in its toils:

“The greatest affliction of the sorrowful soul in this state is the thought that God has abandoned it, of which it has no doubt; that He has cast it away into darkness as an abominable thing. . . . The shadow of death and the pains of hell are most acutely felt; that is, the sense of being without God, being chastised and abandoned in His wrath and heavy displeasure. All this and even more the soul feels now, for a fearful apprehension has come upon it that thus it will be with it forever. It has also the same sense of abandonment with respect to all creatures and that it is an object of contempt to all, especially to its friends.”<sup>6</sup>

Nobody knows how many in Christian history have been thus engulfed and have had their lives warped. They are the “backsliders” of all ages who have surrendered under strain, and are heard from no more. Belief that one has committed “the unpardonable sin” has meant, for some, permanent melancholia. But the great mystics and saints who passed through to come out on the farther side are unanimous in their testimony that the “dark night” is a purifying experience—a part of the divine process of refinement by fire that the dross may be burned away. Though none would choose it, many have rejoiced in it after the dawn. Miss Underhill says of it: “This ‘great negation’ is the sorting-house of the spiritual life. . . .

<sup>5</sup> *Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. xxiii.

<sup>6</sup> *The Dark Night of the Soul*, Book 2, Ch. 6.

Those who go on are the great and strong spirits, who do not seek to *know*, but are driven to *be*.”<sup>7</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

What, then, from our modern knowledge of psychology—abnormal and otherwise—can we make of it?

The temptation is simply to dismiss it as pathological morbidity—perhaps to label it simply as a nervous breakdown which nobody would need to have if he were healthy-minded. As William James reminds us, the struggles of the sick soul must always seem unmanly and morbid, almost obscene to the person who has never had them.

But if one is disposed to dismiss such anguish, either scornfully or semisymphatically, as the meanderings of a diseased mind, it is well to remember that most of the persons cited were saints. In fact, they were greater Christians than most of us will ever be! And again a word from William James is in order: “Here is the real core of the religious problem: Help! help! No prophet can claim to bring a final message unless he says things that will have a sound of reality in the ears of victims such as these.”<sup>8</sup>

When one looks into the inner experience of those who have left their record of the “dark night,” several factors stand out as causes. Among them are exhaustion, anxiety, excessive introspection and a frustrated search for spiritual enjoyment. Each merits a further word.

It is highly probable that there were physical causes for some of these experiences. The saints of the past knew less than we (and we know all too little) about the effects on the spiritual life of the nerve strain caused by infections, malnutrition, glandular disturbance and the labored functioning of a diseased or misplaced organ. What they saw in their overt illnesses were punishments and trials sent by the Lord. Doubtless many times they were sick without knowing it. The evidence is meager here. But one form of illness, current in Christian leaders to the present, most of them had.

When one has worked excessively at his religious life, whether in works of meditation and prayer or in deeds of service, there comes inevitably a backswing. It is an obvious fact, but one which most ardent souls must learn from experience, that one cannot indefinitely expend either

<sup>7</sup> *Mysticism*, p. 454.

<sup>8</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 162.

physical or psychic energy. When in the grip of a great enthusiasm one attempts to do so, Nature reminds us that the soul is tethered to a body. Most of the mystics, for all of their hours at prayer, seem to have been very intense persons. Even the rapture of the vision of God takes its toll, and one finds in the story of such a joyous, single-minded soul as St. Francis great periods of weeping which injured his eyesight. Sometimes because their praying was not sufficiently balanced with labor, sometimes because their labors were too much for frail bodies in a day that knew little of medical care or physical comforts, they wore themselves out. Depression was a natural consequence.

As one reads their records it is clear that those who passed through the "dark night" were very much concerned about themselves. They worried too much about their souls for their own good. But this does not get to the bottom of the situation, which is that they worried *because they thought they had lost the one thing most needful*. To one who has dedicated his soul to God and has felt the life-giving sense of God's presence, there is no deeper hell than to feel bereft of it. To take this nonchalantly, if it were possible, would be sin; when one is the kind of person we are considering it is not possible. The "dark night" is fundamentally an anxiety neurosis, and this according to Dr. Karen Horney, is the root of "the neurotic personality of our time."<sup>9</sup> But no one will escape from it by being told by well-meaning friends to "buck up and stop worrying!"

But why so much introspection and fingering of motives and states? Would they not have done better to take themselves less seriously? When one reads John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, with its account of alternate periods of great elation and depression and an overwhelming conviction of sin (swearing and Sabbath-breaking being the only specific offenses mentioned), it seems apparent that Bunyan greatly overstates his "vileness and wickedness." There is an awful earnestness about the story which commands respect even while it raises questions about Bunyan's mental health. So, too, with the self-excoriation characteristic of the literature of the "dark night." But why, one is continually prompted to ask, did they not trust God and stop fussing about themselves?

This brings us to the crucial factor. Those who passed through it with one voice record their belief, in retrospect, that God had led them to it because in His love He desired to call them to a higher level of the

<sup>9</sup> See her excellent book by this title for an illuminating popular treatment of various neuroses. It does not deal with the religious problem.

life of devotion. What they had to undergo was an experience of "self-naughting" in which they must learn to give up for God not only worldly but even spiritual pleasures. In the words of the *Theologia Germanica*, they must "be simply and wholly bereft of self." They must learn to "lie still under God's hand," to surrender "the I, the me, the mine," to live for God alone.

One does not catch what the mystics meant if he supposes that this self-surrender refers to ordinary carnal selfishness, such as one must repent of before one becomes a Christian and keep repenting of. It is something far more subtle and devastating. It means pride in being well thought of as a servant of God, satisfaction in being able to do well the works of God. But at a still deeper level of self-centeredness, it means enjoyment of God's presence in prayer—the quest for spiritual blessings through communion with Him, not for the love of God but for one's own satisfaction. What the mystics saw, after God had used the painful experience of the "dark night" to open their eyes, was that to enjoy God before one glorifies Him is to lose the assurance of His presence.

The meaning of this in terms of different levels of religious experience is vividly brought out in Madame Guyon's *Spiritual Torrents*, where she likens Christians to three kinds of rivers. There is the first class of souls "who, after their conversion, give themselves up to meditation, or even to works of charity. . . . They do not cease to flow from the source, but it is so feebly as to be barely perceptible. . . . These rivers carry little or no merchandise, and, therefore, for the public need, it must be taken to them. . . . The spiritual life of this class only thrives in proportion to their work . . . they resemble pumps, which only yield water in proportion as they are agitated."<sup>10</sup> (Save for the reference to meditation, one recognizes here the ordinary church member, and some preachers!) The second class "are like those large rivers which move with a slow and steady course. . . . They are charged with merchandise. . . . Their strength is very abundant; they are laden with gifts, and graces, and celestial favors; they are the admiration of their generation and numbers of saints who shine as stars in the Church have never passed this limit." Why need they pass it? The answer is poignant, "and yet they are never really brought to a state of annihilation to self."<sup>11</sup> The third class of souls are mountain torrents which, passing many precipices and abysses, move

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, Part I, Ch. ii.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. iii.

on to the sea to be lost in it. "And there, however poor, mean, useless, destitute of merchandise the poor torrent may have been, it is wonderfully enriched . . . for it is rich with the riches of the sea itself. It bears on its bosom the largest vessels; it is the sea which bears them, and yet it is the river, because the river, being lost in the sea, has become one with it."<sup>12</sup>

Though the symbolism here is not that of the "dark night," the idea is the same. What the saints saw, after God had chastened them, was that they were now ready to carry great merchandise, not of their own gifts and graces or even of their own spiritual devotion, but on the boundless bosom of the sea.

\* \* \* \* \*

Though the experience we have been considering is so timeless as to require no homiletical application, some concluding observations may be in order. Is the "dark night" so desirable, in view of its fruits, that it ought to be cultivated? I should hesitate to say so. It is, as we have seen, from a psychological standpoint often the result of undesirable physical and psychical strains. Doubtless many more souls have been ruined by it than redeemed. Like other forms of pain, it is to be avoided for one's self and prevented in others if it can be without surrender of integrity or evasion of duty.

Does God send such an experience by withdrawing His presence? Or were the abandoned saints self-deceived during an abnormal mental state? There is no simple alternative here. If one believes in "grace abounding," as any Christian must who takes the New Testament seriously, one cannot believe that at any time God withdraws His grace either from the chief of sinners or the chief of saints. For many reasons one may lose the sense of God's presence—but that is another matter.

Yet this is not to say that God has no part in the "dark night." Those were right who saw in it the working of His holy purpose drawing them to Himself. Again as in other forms of pain (though this is the deepest and darkest of them all), pain is not its own last word. It may be God's word calling the soul toward light. It *is* God's word if the sufferer lets himself be drawn by it toward the annihilation of self and the merging of his petty torrent with the sea. It is well that God has led some of His followers through such devious ways of darkness to the dawn.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. iv.



# William Adams Brown

1865-1943

SAMUEL MCCREA CAVERT

## I

**B**Y NATURAL gifts and by training, William Adams Brown was a scholar of the first rank. When he was graduated from Yale in 1886, with Phi Beta Kappa honors, his intellectual interests were already sufficiently kindled to lead him to remain in the University for a year of postgraduate study. During this year, although he had already decided to enter the ministry, he did his major work in the field of economics. In a seminar under the direction of the famous Professor William G. Sumner, he wrote his first scholarly production, an essay published in the *Political Science Quarterly* on the state control of industry in the fourth century. The source materials were nearly all in Latin. Doctor Brown's research in this connection marked the beginning of his lifelong historical interest and use of the historical method.

In 1887 he entered the Union Theological Seminary. His interest in the service of the Church flowed naturally out of his family background. His maternal grandfather, Dr. William Adams, long-time pastor of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church (now merged with the First Presbyterian) in New York, and later president of Union Seminary, was one of the most eminent American clergymen of his generation. On his father's side, the young student came from a line of three generations of merchant bankers heading the firm of Brown Brothers and Co. in New York, closely associated with the London house of Brown Shipley & Co. Though engrossed in the financial world the Browns, like the Adams, had a deep devotion to the Church. James Brown, grandfather of the subject of this sketch, had been one of the founders both of Union Seminary and the Presbyterian Hospital in New York. His son, John Crosby Brown—William Adams Brown's father—was a member of the board of directors of the Seminary for forty-three years and was president of the board from 1897 to 1909.

During the years while William Adams Brown was a student at Union Seminary, the storm of controversy was brewing which was soon to break over Professor Charles A. Briggs. It was a time of ferment occasioned by

the impact of modern scientific thought. Theology was still being traditionally interpreted at Union in terms of scholastic Calvinism, but teachers like Doctor Briggs and Philip Schaff and Francis Brown were already absorbed in the literary and historical study of the Bible. In this atmosphere the young student began to wrestle with the problem of the permanent versus the relative aspects of Christianity. His interest in history was deepened; his interest in philosophy was awakened. He specialized considerably in Kant, pondering *The Critique of Pure Reason* in a Columbia seminar conducted by Professor (now President) Nicholas Murray Butler.

On graduation, William Adams Brown went to the University of Berlin as a fellow of Union Seminary, studying chiefly under the illustrious Adolf Harnack, who was then approaching the zenith of his influence. Young Brown's focus of study at this stage was the earlier period of Church history, through which he was feeling his way to a definition of the distinctive character of Christianity—a subject which was to engage his mind throughout his entire life.

Returning home in 1892, he began teaching at Union Seminary, an association which was to continue for forty-four years until his retirement in 1936. At first his field was Church history, but after a single year he was appointed instructor in theology. In 1895 he was designated provisional professor and in 1898 was elected Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology. In 1930, at his own request, he was transferred to a new post as Research Professor of Applied Christianity.

The theme of Doctor Brown's inaugural address when he took the Roosevelt chair of systematic theology was symbolic of his whole structure of thought—"Christ the Vitalizing Principle of Christian Theology." His central concern was to interpret the Christian faith in terms which would at once be true to its historic genius, grounded in an unchanging revelation of God, and also be compatible with the modes of contemporary thinking. His key to the unity of Christianity, in spite of changing conceptions and conditions through the centuries, is precisely indicated in the title of his inaugural address. After emphasizing the need for the theologian to "mediate between the old and the new," he asks what is to be the point of contact between "the faith of the past and the life of the present." His answer, then and always, was the personality of Jesus Christ.

Doctor Brown's earlier teaching was carried on in an era in which the place of the historic creeds was the uppermost issue in theological circles. At one extreme were those who dogmatically insisted on repeating the

creeds in the strictest literalness at every point. At the other extreme were those who regarded the creeds as outmoded by modern thought. Neither of these alternatives could satisfy him. His conclusion—a crucial clue to his theological approach—was that one must distinguish between the abiding convictions which the creeds affirm and the particular intellectual forms or language in which those convictions find expression. There was need, he felt, for reinterpretation and redefinition in order that the basic affirmations of the creeds might be made vital to a generation schooled in new types of thought. By this path Doctor Brown found the way of keeping abreast, and of helping hosts of other men to keep abreast, of scientific thinking while maintaining an unbroken continuity with the Christian heritage. At heart he was essentially a conservative, steadfastly holding that in Jesus Christ mankind had been given a unique revelation of the nature of Reality.

## II

In addition to the thousands of students for the ministry who came under Doctor Brown's personal influence there were many more thousands who were indebted to his books. He produced a score of weighty volumes which have made a solid impact upon the thinking of the Church during the last half century.

His first theological treatise, *The Essence of Christianity*, published in 1902, was prophetic of the course of his future scholarship. The subtitle, "A Study in the History of Definition," indicated his desire to discover, in the midst of all the divergent conceptions of the Christian religion, what is the essential core that provides its coherence and unity throughout the ages. The method of finding the answer is that of historical survey and analysis. At the end of this first volume he states his own conclusion: "The possession in Christ of the supreme revelation of God's love and power constitutes the distinctive mark of Christianity and justifies its claim to be the final religion."

At the time when William Adams Brown began his teaching, there was no textbook in theology which took adequate account of the changes in theological thought due to scientific thinking. As the result of his classroom work and his study during the first decade of his teaching, Doctor Brown was able to fill the gap. In 1906 his *Christian Theology in Outline* appeared, a book which still remains one of the great systematic treatments of the subject. It had two outstanding marks. The first was its historical approach. Its discussion of every Christian doctrine was illumined by

reference to its classical sources and its subsequent historical development. This method served to indicate both the continuity in Christian thought and the relevance of the older formulations of doctrine for today. The other characteristic note was the Christo-centric emphasis—a note which was to remain constant in all his writing. As he said reminiscently in his autobiography, *A Teacher and His Times*, “From this original emphasis upon the person of Jesus I have seen no reason to depart.” Through all the later years of his life he was thinking about a final volume in which he would deal with the meaning of Jesus Christ for the world. Happily, he had nearly completed his Christology during the summer before his death and the volume is expected to appear posthumously.

After his general outline of theology, Doctor Brown addressed himself intensively to the doctrine of immortality, and *The Christian Hope* appeared in 1912. Although the social meaning of the Kingdom of God had come to occupy a large place in his thinking, he did not here, or elsewhere, identify the Christian hope with any earthly consummation. He finds belief in the survival of personality and in an unending fellowship with God integral to Christianity.

A decade later his growing participation in the practical work of the Church received literary expression in his large volume, *The Church in America*. This was written just after the first World War, during which he had been at the center of the wartime activity of the American churches, and gathers up the lessons learned from that experience. In his earlier writings the Church received slight attention, but during the last twenty years no subject was closer to his heart. Holding the firm conviction that the Christian ideals for society are practicable, he came to see clearly that the great test of their practicability was in the Church itself as the society of Christians. If the Church can be made Christian, he said—Christian, that is to say, in its whole institutional life—there is clear ground for hope that human society can be Christianized. If, however, the Church cannot itself be truly Christian—in its social policies, in its interracial fellowship, in its international outlook, there is no reason to assume that the world at large will ever regard Christian ethics as really workable in the more complicated relations of life. It is impressive to observe how strongly this point of view is stressed in the latest of Doctor Brown's books, *The New Order in the Church*, published during the last year of his life and designed for a more popular audience than most of his other writings.

Doctor Brown's enthusiasm for Christian unity is most clearly manifested in *The Church, Catholic and Protestant* (1935). The title indicates the sweep of his interest. He was sensitively aware of the rich diversity of the Christian experience and had learned to be deeply appreciative of every Christian heritage. His primary concern was for a greater unity among the bodies that shared the background of the Reformation, but he found in Catholicism, both Roman and Eastern, as well as in the Anglo-Catholic position, spiritual values which he cherished. There was no Christian in our generation to whom the adjective "ecumenical" could be more fittingly applied.

In addition to the unpublished manuscript on Christology to which reference has already been made, Doctor Brown left, at his death, a manuscript of the history of the ecumenical movement, covering the period from 1910, the date of the Edinburgh conference on world missions, to our own day. There is more than casual import in the fact that the two subjects with which he was most concerned in his last years were Jesus Christ and the ecumenical Christian Church. These were the great passions of his life.

Within the brief limits of this article it is not possible to discuss all of his other important writings. They include *Imperialistic Religion and the Religion of Democracy*, a new effort in the classification of types of religion; *Beliefs That Matter*, a nontechnical discussion of the cardinal Christian doctrines; *Pathways to Certainty*, a careful analysis of the methods of arriving at valid knowledge of God and religious truth; and *God at Work: A Study of the Supernatural*, revitalizing an ancient concept which many of Doctor Brown's contemporaries thought had been outgrown. He also wrote several other theological volumes of a more popular character and more than two hundred articles and essays.

Besides the works that came entirely from his pen there are several in which he was a leading collaborator. These deal chiefly with the more practical affairs of the Church. The report on *The Church and Industrial Reconstruction*, issued by the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook in 1921, reflected his mind and approach more than that of any other man. His was a major part in the report on *The Christian College in India*, produced in 1931 by a commission appointed by the International Missionary Council. The first of the four massive volumes on *The Education of American Ministers*, published in 1934, and *Church and State in Contemporary America*, prepared by a committee of the Federal Council



of Churches in 1936, were almost entirely his work. Into such co-operative productions as these, even though he knew he would receive little or no personal credit, he poured the same energy and devotion that went into his own individual writings.

The record of Doctor Brown's literary output would be incomplete without at least a reference to three little volumes that are less widely known: *The Life of Prayer in a World of Science*, still one of the finest books on prayer; *The Quiet Hour*, a collection of services of worship and meditation; and *Finding God in a New World*, a series of sermons. In all three he unconsciously discloses the depth of his own personal faith and experience.

### III

For most people the pursuits of the scholar are not compatible with a busy participation in practical affairs, but the case was otherwise with Doctor Brown. He was never content with an academic role detached from the pulsing life of the world. Side by side with his teaching and his productive scholarship went a vigorous role in the ongoing work of the Church. The result of this combination was a happy one. His scholarship gave a rare quality of wisdom and long-range vision to his practical work, and his firsthand contacts with movements of organized Christianity lent pertinence and reality to his teaching and writing.<sup>1</sup>

A key to the understanding of the connection between Doctor Brown, the theologian, and Doctor Brown, the active churchman, is found in his conception of the social significance of the Christian religion. Since love and fellowship are of the very heart of the Christian revelation, Christianity is involved in all the relations of men. His social interest found an early outreach in the settlement-house movement. He was one of the founders of Union Settlement in 1895, on the upper East Side of New York, and a member of its board of directors for thirty-five years. A little later he became directly related to the home missionary work of the Presbyterian Church among the foreign-speaking populations of New York. Acutely aware of the common problems faced by all the missionary agencies of the metropolis, he helped to form the interdenominational City Missions Council and was its first chairman. His missionary interest expanded when he became a member of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions.

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<sup>1</sup> Here and at many other points I am indebted to Charles Scribner's Sons for permission to use, in a modified form, materials which I wrote for the symposium, *The Church Through Half a Century*, produced by former students of Doctor Brown as a tribute to him in 1936.



In this connection he was one of the strongest supporters of its experimental project in the Labor Temple on New York's lower East Side.

But no one of Doctor Brown's universal outlook could confine his interests to a single country. He helped to create the Grenfell Association that supports the work begun by that great medical missionary in Labrador. In 1916 he attended the Congress on Christian Work in Latin America, held in Panama. Thence he went on a visit of several months to the Far East. His lectures in the Orient, published under the title *Is Christianity Practicable?* reflected his growing sense of the significance of the Christian Gospel for international life. For a decade he was president of the board of directors of the Constantinople College for Women. His most intensive service to the Christian world mission was made as a member of the International Commission on Christian Higher Education in India, headed by A. D. Lindsay, the Master of Balliol, in 1930.

In the whole field of education Doctor Brown moved freely and competently. For more than a dozen years he was a member of the governing board of Yale University, and for most of this period chairman of its committee on educational policy. In all aspects of theological education he was completely at home. When the Institute of Social and Religious Research in 1930 undertook a survey of the work of the ministry today and of the methods of training ministers—the most comprehensive treatment of the subject ever made—Doctor Brown was one of the chief advisers, and it was he who wrote the interpretative volume. One of the outcomes was the formation of the American Association of Theological Schools as a permanent body with an executive secretary.

His theological study and his practical experience conspired to make Doctor Brown an ardent advocate of Christian unity. He always thought of the oneness of the Church as a spiritual reality, actually existing because all the different bodies of Christians have a common source in Jesus Christ. But he discerned clearly the necessity for embodying the spirit of unity in some form that would be visible to the world, and he was convinced that at the present stage this could best be done by well-defined plans of co-operative witness and work. He also insisted that it would be along the path of present fellowship and united service that the goal of the fuller unity of the future would be reached.

When the World War came in 1917, Doctor Brown found his great opportunity for national leadership in interchurch co-operation. He took the main part in developing, under the aegis of the Federal Council of the

Churches of Christ in America, the General Wartime Commission, and became its executive, with Dr. Robert E. Speer as chairman. The work of the Commission carried the co-operative spirit to a new level of accomplishment. This was succeeded by the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, of which Doctor Brown was the chairman and which, in five timely volumes, focussed the thinking of the churches on some of their most urgent tasks.

After the war, as one of the ways of making the increasing co-operative spirit effective, Doctor Brown took an influential part in forming the Federal Council's Department of Research and Education in order that Protestantism might have a central bureau for continuous study of basic problems affecting all the churches. He became chairman of the Department when it was organized in 1920 and continued in this capacity until 1938. His alert sympathy was given to every phase of the Federal Council's work. For a quarter of a century it had no more valuable friend. He gave unstinted time to committee service and even assumed the arduous function of helping to secure financial support. More important, he contributed out of his ripe wisdom to the formation of its policies.

Doctor Brown's vision of Christian unity overleaped all national boundaries. He saw the Church as a great ecumenical society, binding men of every land and race into one world-wide fellowship in Christ. Nothing appealed quite so much to his imagination as the prospect that the Church should really be able to function as one Body of Christ throughout the world.

In the epoch-making Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work, held in Stockholm in 1925, and in all the preparatory work therefor, Doctor Brown was one of the moving spirits, intimately associated with Doctor Söderblom, the Archbishop of Upsala. This was the first time when representatives of all the great Protestant families and of the Greek Orthodox Churches had come together in an official ecclesiastical assembly. Following the Conference, Doctor Brown devoted himself to building up the American section of the continuing body. Almost every summer he went to Europe to attend meetings of the international executive committee. His facility in languages gave him a qualification for international work that few American churchmen possess. During this same period he was actively engaged in the other ecumenical development represented by the World Conference on Faith and Order. He was a delegate to its first meeting in Lausanne in 1927 and thereafter served as a member of its continuation committee.

Doctor Brown was one of the first to perceive that "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" belong together. He kept insisting, on the one hand, that co-operation in practical tasks must be based on a body of clearly-held common convictions about Christianity itself, and on the other hand, that agreement in the theological realm would be furthered by the experience of fellowship in common tasks. It was this insistence that was a chief factor in the arrangements for holding the second conference on Life and Work and the second conference on Faith and Order in definite relation with each other—one in Oxford, the other in Edinburgh—in the summer of 1937. In both of these great gatherings he was an outstanding figure, and shared with the Archbishop of York (now of Canterbury) the privilege of presiding over some of the Oxford sessions. In the plan for drawing the two movements together in the World Council of Churches, given organizational form at the Utrecht Conference in 1938, his role has been an important one. He was designated one of the eight American members of the Provisional Committee of the World Council, and at the time of his death he was chairman of the Joint Executive Committee on Life and Work and Faith and Order in North America, which, in the interim until the World Council can be officially consummated in a world assembly, functions as its arm in this country.

Doctor Brown once remarked to his wife that he would like his epitaph to be simply "Servant of the Church of Christ." This was a prophecy of the way in which he was to be regarded by others after his earthly work was done. But whereas he thought of himself only as a "servant" we think of him also—and for that very reason—as first among the American statesmen of the ecumenical Church.

## Ministers and Strait Jackets

JAMES W. KENNEDY

I SPENT four months of my life in a mental hospital. The summer of 1931 between terms at the seminary I went to the Worcester State Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts—not as a patient, but as one to whom the hospital had much to give. I realized that even then. Worcester was chosen both because of its outstanding and progressive work along therapeutic lines for the mentally sick. It is the oldest of the many state hospitals in Massachusetts. This hospital was, at the time, in the midst of many new experiments which gave promise of results in cures. I remember well the work of Doctor Marsh and his approach to group therapy (we called them Marsh prayer meetings), the work of some French doctor in the realm of hypnosis (I do not remember his name), the use of radio and music in an experimental way, and many other methods and drugs that gave promise of cures or relief to the mentally sick—all these were being used at the time of my stay there.

I had become absorbed in psychology and psychiatry and social case work while at the seminary and was convinced that in these fields lay the answer to a successful pastoral ministry, which quite naturally I wanted to achieve. I learned later that it took a lot more than this.

There I worked on the wards as attendant five hours a day with one day off each week; for another five hours I attended lectures, studied case records, talked with patients, worked on the two case histories which were to be required as proof of my learning. There were many extracurricular activities in the evenings and at odd hours in the laboratories, wards, operating and autopsy rooms; and much time was spent in comparing notes with others there—young internes, occupational therapy workers, nurses, embryo preachers, etc. It was the most expanding and expansive period of my life up to that point and made an impression I have never forgotten. I wish there were space to write all my experiences, but I shall be able to squeeze in but a few.

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As I think back, I believe I went there primarily to learn about sick minds as a clue to sick souls, and to understand as much of the cause and the cure of both as possible. Spinoza gave me the words for it, "Human

actions should not be laughed at, should not be shocked at, nor held in disdain, but should be understood." During my stay at Worcester I did learn a bit about how to understand the mental mechanism of both abnormal and normal human beings, and this has been of inestimable help to me in my ministry. The greatest benefits came from a better understanding of the "peculiar" individuals one meets every day outside mental hospitals—also of myself. I can still see moving in front of me the infinite tragedy of sorrow and suffering both in families and individuals, as well as that tremendously valuable thing called the human personality, which the hospital was trying to save; I can also see through the windows of my experience these same human situations outside hospitals, likewise going through, as it were, their daily performance. Such insights have enabled me since to approach a bit nearer to my ideal: the ability to enter into the hearts and minds of others; to understand. I believe I have been a better priest, an infinitely better pastor, and a more understanding husband and father for having seen humanity in the raw, and for having glimpsed a few causes of the rawness and the success of a few cures.

Carroll A. Wise, now Chaplain of Worcester State Hospital, with whom I worked during that summer, has written a valuable book on *Religion in Illness and Health*. It covers the subject of religion at work in a mental hospital and the clergyman's part in the co-operative work of doctor, psychiatrist and pastor, in dealing with the intricate and interrelated workings of man's life—body, mind, soul and spirit. This book is good for those who work in hospitals and for those who work outside.

Even though I did not learn enough to write such a book during my limited experience with mental illness that summer, I was able to reach several conclusions which still seem valid, conclusions about the processes of the human mind, the start of such processes and the end. These conclusions were based upon a wide reading and firsthand contact with every known form of mental disease, both functional and organic, among the 2,500 patients in the hospital. These diseases ranged from general paresis, through schizophrenia and paranoia types, to the waste basket of mental diagnosis—the psychopathic personality. I realized that the organic group was beyond my ken and so concentrated mainly on the functional group, especially that difficult waste-basket group which is made up of individuals who are so normal most of the time that very few of them ever land in mental hospitals, but who come frequently into the pastor's study during one of their "queer" periods. My interest, then, had to do with the func-

tional psychoses—that is, those not based upon any organic causation or lesion.

My first conclusion was that the fundamental cause of most of these functional psychoses was some kind of inner conflict, as yet unresolved. The inability to make a decision or to take a stand keeps one's mind and spirit in a state of tension and turmoil, and this leads eventually (unless terminated in some other way) to an attempted escape through living in another world (schizophrenia), or to a complex of some kind (paranoid-persecution), or into a depression (manic-depressive). A sense of guilt, a feeling of fear, aroused anger, a frustration or repression, the primitive instincts and passions, and appetites such as sex and hunger, are in the forefront as causes of these psychoses and neuroses. Knowing the end results and the things that lead to them enables one who is alert enough and trained a bit to detect signs far enough in advance to shunt them off from the otherwise inevitable consequences. This has enabled me to sometimes catch heart and soul sickness before it becomes mind sickness. I try to keep a sharp lookout for the first signs of lack of control in attitudes and tendencies, and discovering them, I try to help relax and resolve the various factors of tension and conflicts involved, so as to redirect and control the dangerous tendencies. I learned that my job as pastor is not to attempt to be a psychiatrist but a Christian psychologist who will show how the past may be purged of its fears and stings and bitter hurts, and so point the way to release from the bondage of the past. Pastors must deal with present conditions in individuals which if left alone may lead to mental sickness, from uncontrolled anger to obsessions of persecution or inferiority or guilt—when persons so afflicted are willing to yield up these evil pets. My experience has helped me to distinguish between neuroses and psychoses, and personality kinks and maladjustments, to see that the former cases are sent to a psychiatrist, and that the latter are dealt with in a thorough, intelligent, spiritual fashion, often in co-operation with a doctor. My experience has helped me to deal with borderline cases and to keep those who could be helped from continuing toward deeper darkness their journey in the dark. If for no other reason, then, I am thankful for this experience, for it has prevented me from belonging to that certain group of clergymen who, having read a few books on moral theology, psychology and social case work, strive to combine the methods in use in the various fields into a *vade mecum* for their pastoral ministry. Unfortunately, most of these men are dabblers, feeling and attempting to act like experts after having



read a single book, perhaps, in each field; and the results of their advice frequently reveal their amateurish standing, to say nothing of the actual harm done. The chief blunders we clergymen sometimes make, tragic to souls in need, come from conclusions based upon the principles and techniques of a science about which we know little or nothing. In so doing we lose the respect of the experts in these fields. Of course, we must read books, attend lectures and conferences to broaden and increase our knowledge of human nature and human relations. But we must not in the name of honesty and decency pose as experts until we *have* expertly mastered *one field*, and have proven our ability to practice in that field. My own hospital experience quite definitely prevented me ever after from posing as an expert. I remember a quotation from Hippocrates garnered that summer from a lecture: "*To know* is one thing; merely *to believe one knows* is another. To know is science, but merely to believe one knows is ignorance."

The trend of the Christian religion today is toward more co-operation with medical science, psychology and psychiatry especially, and its exact and exacting approach toward people's difficulties (*The Soul Doctor*, by Doctor Zahnizer, explains it well). The trend of modern psychiatry is toward an understanding of the whole man, recognizing the many hidden factors with which the Christian religion can deal, such as faith for fear, forgiveness for guilt. A well-known psychiatrist informs me that rarely do we find a meeting of psychiatrists today where the soul or spirit or total personality and being of man are not considered seriously and at length. Therefore, it is important that the clergy and the medical profession work more closely together as allies in the quest for preventives and cures for the minds and souls of men.

I have since worked with several doctors and psychiatrists on functional cases, and have recently had a distinguished psychiatrist, Dr. Gregory Zilborg, speak in my chapel on *The Smiling Christ*. I shall not soon forget the first case I had of such co-operation after leaving the hospital that summer. A certain doctor had reached the end of his rope with a patient and in desperation called me in as a minister. The patient was in a deep depression caused by a horrible sense of sin and guilt, and was a potential suicide, and the doctor realized that a sense of forgiveness was the only thing which could save him. We battled for hours without success. The man did commit suicide. This was a blow to my pride and my conscience. What could have saved him? This case and others made me realize the

need for more than a knowledge of mental states and case records, and the further realization that the love and power of God must be realized as present or *no cure*. The inadequacies of psychiatry for the whole man became clear to me then and I have not forgotten.

Certain experiences in the hospital and other experiences since leaving have kept me in remembrance of most of the things learned while there. I well remember my initial tripping of the wards; the terrible and vivid impression of that first glimpse never grew commonplace. I never became a hardened witness to this world of locks and keys and paced longings for which there was so often no fulfillment; this land of the dead whose only hope lay in a resurrection; this winding, tortuous, heart-rending lane of living rooms, each wrapping within itself a tragedy—beings whose last vestige of the human seemed for the moment to have been torn away—disgusting, repulsive, yet so very pitiful. I thought, this pile of stone is a progressive mental hospital, stemming from the cruel days of custodial care only—an asylum full to the brim with the sick, and is dedicated wholly to their care and cure.

My first impression was of deadly monotony, a routine of idleness and brooding. This impression was soon corrected, however, by the many bright spots—the never flagging zeal, interest and kindness of doctors, nurses and attendants. They went at their task of releasing each patient from his own little hell with the contagious assurance that it could be done.

When those *outside* realize that mental illness is the result of the normal processes of life becoming for the moment top-heavy and unbalanced, and not the just punishment for some sin nor the manifestation of an evil infestation, the chances for a person's return to normal life will be greatly enhanced. None of us is immune. I found there a college professor whose self-centered, selfish sex life got from under control; a young Roman Catholic priest troubled with an overpowering sense of inferiority; a doctor, a lawyer, a businessman falling before the inevitable results of neglected syphilis; a laborer whose thirsty lips were cooled too often; a woman deprived of her share of love; a young girl paying the price of "happy" hours; a child who had never learned to play. Most of them, if they had known, could have been helped back to health before the break came.

The best way to study a subject is to battle your way to its source. That is what I tried to do. Through case studies and actual contact with their living counterparts, the murky ignorance of gigantic pictures con-

jured up by such words as "schizophrenia" and "paranoia" were made clear and sharply defined—the fearsome unattainable became a commonplace. I repeat: the key word to the understanding of all mental illness is "conflict." Conflicts usually arise from threats and fears, from the rebellion of suppressed feelings, and from things we do not want to know and will not face. When we find out what causes the conflict we can usually find a cure. When a person is adjusted *to* and *for* life, with an absorbing interest at heart, he rarely ever goes "haywire."

Our radio studio at the hospital was an attic room all bright with gunny sacks and squeaky chairs, a silent window, a baby piano and a tiny mike. The patients enjoyed our sparkling programs of musical hilarity! We found they actually did. I was a Little Merry Sunshine and broadcast a fifteen-minute program of music and good advice each morning. Over this hospital radio we practiced group hypnosis for the quieting of patients in the pack rooms, and they needed it. We also broadcast special musical programs to calm and orient certain types of illness. None of these experiments were conclusive. Here I suppose I got my first thought of a "Haven"—my daily, early morning, devotional program of five minutes.

My favorite patient was Sarah Cottrell—Sadie, a psycho-neurotic whose case I studied in endless detail. We became great friends. I shall give a brief resume of part of her story.

I remember days and nights with Sadie, bat after bat, one day groggy with paraldehyde, the next doped and crazy, the next moody and threatening. Many a time in camisole (strait jacket), many a night of moans and bad dreams. I learned to handle Sadie both physically and mentally. She would not fight me. I carried her back from many a crazed wandering in a maze of wards. I tried to be a real friend.

I sat by her bedside at night, watching her sunken lips utter words and emit the stench of paraldehyde. I assisted in putting her in sheet restraint after mad struggles, with Margaret, her shadowlight, the good ghost of a bad memory, always hovering in the background. "Things" crawled on the wall for Sadie, pictures turned to demons, horrors! I remember when for over a week Sadie was the worst she had ever been. Then one morning she awoke weak, terribly weak, but normal. She gradually made a comeback. Her powers of recuperation were amazing. I told her all that had happened. She remembered nothing. She was heartbroken to learn of her condition. After this when I inquired how she was, her answer was invariably, "Oh, not too bad!"

I read to her much of the time. She was still weak and had to stay in bed. In addition to this lamentable mental condition, she had tuberculosis. One lung was gone and the other looked like a snowstorm in the X-rays. She smoked innumerable cigarettes. How could they deprive her? She had been "sentenced" already. She told me tales of her life in Canada, hair-raising stories of her existence in the mental hospitals there. I absorbed them. She had the reputation of being the worst patient in the history of the hospital on Prince Edward Island. I shall never forget this incident. . . .

The pathetic first night in a mental hospital. Alone with strange noises, a terrible stench and the horrible fear of death. She was fretting so much they put her in a camisole by force and locked her in to sleep as best she could. This was the first link in Sadie's rebellion against attendants and nurses and doctors which has not abated to this day. She decided to meet cruelty with resistance. As a result she stayed in camisole most of the time under lock and key. And there were many, many such tales.

Sadie was allowed parole as soon as she was better. Again we had long walks together. She loved the quiet and peace of the woods. It was her church, her confessional. Favorite spots became shrines. I could never help her much, but she did unburden herself to me. At such times she thought clearly and deeply upon the vital issues of her life as contrasted with others more fortunate than she. Sometimes she became a bit bitter. At other times she was quite cheerful and often said: "God is good. It is His will." She wanted to be a good Catholic. Sadie was always kind when she was in her right mind. It is hard to leave the story of Sadie. Incident after incident crowd into my mind out of the past, but leave her we must.

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I grew in patience and compassion. Such words as integration, insight, maturity became intelligible. The common sources of conflict stood out as unbridled appetites (sex and hunger), violent emotions (fear and anger); and the major sins, according to psychology, were learned to be fear and anger. Jesus dealt with them, and in the Sermon on the Mount are adequate answers.

I learned also:

That tension is commonly associated with three emotions: anxiety, guilt and resentment;

That hatred and resentment, guilt and shame and anxiety produce conflict and frustration;

That unsolved personal problems in one period of life are always a handicap in the next period;

That the "I" and not the "Thou" is at the center of *all* functional psychoses and incipient mental sickness;

That one does not break the laws of the inner or of the external world without suffering;

That adaptation to environment is essential for mental health—adaptation to new and difficult situations;

That inner adjustment to life, real spiritual control of life—poise and tranquillity of mind—is being mentally healthy;

That insight and faith concerning the unknown (that really includes all the problems of life and therefore the higher levels of growth) is the heart of religion;

That true religion leads the individual to a way of life based on the principles of insight and co-operation, not on those of evasion and escape;

That Jesus had the perfect grasp of realities and insights that lead to wholeness. God's laws must be obeyed or . . . .

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As I grow older I am ever more grateful for this view into the mental illnesses of men and the importance of mental hygiene, which is in reality the importance of religion in the normal and abnormal life of man.

This phase of my pastoral training gave new meaning to that later occasion when I took my ordination vows. I have often thought of one of them. I can hear the Bishop saying now: ". . . . and see that ye never cease your labour, your care and diligence, until ye have done all that lieth in you . . . . to bring all such as are or shall be committed to your charge unto the agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you, either for error in religion, or for viciousness in life."

To which then, and now, I am willing to respond, "I will."

# Christianity and History

JACK FINEGAN

**C**HRISTIANITY is distinguished by its historical character from all faiths which are centered primarily in nature or in individual experience.

## NATURE-CENTERED RELIGION

From the earliest times until the present, men have perceived religious implications in the phenomena of the natural universe. Much of primitive religion was a response to the awe-inspiring or fear-inspiring aspects of the environing world and in most of the national religions of the past the worship of various objects of nature was prominent. To mention only the sun, for example, we may recall that it was worshiped in Babylonia as Shamash, in Egypt as Re, or Aten, in Greece as Helios, in Persia as Mithras, at Rome as Sol Invictus, in India as Mitra and in many other lands under yet other names.

While such a solar monotheism as that advanced by Ikhnaton was truly exalted and while the worship of a sun goddess like Amaterasu still persists in such a land as Japan, it is no longer possible for the sophisticated mind to take seriously an actual identification of God with a specific object of nature. Nevertheless a sense of awe continues to be felt in the presence of the transcendent sublimity or fathomless mystery of nature. As modern science patiently proceeds with the exploration of the physical universe an ever-vaster orderliness unfolds before our eyes. While the cosmic picture seems demonstrably materialistic to some, to others it appears fraught with the most profoundly religious implications. The patternful regularities of the universe cannot be explained, these latter thinkers believe, as the haphazard outcome of blind chance, but rather must be taken to indicate the existence of an integrating process whose nature is akin to what we know as mind. Hence, in the great enterprise of science, mind is tracing the manifestation of mind and the devout scientist exclaims with Kepler,

Almighty God,  
These are Thy thoughts, I am thinking after Thee!<sup>1</sup>

Thus there arises a religion of science in which is cherished what

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Noyes, *Watchers of the Sky* (1922), p. 115.



Spinoza called "the intellectual love of God."<sup>2</sup> God is no longer identified crudely with specific natural phenomena, as in primitive religion, but he is recognized as that process of integration which is manifested by the universe. Such an approach to religion may be regarded as inspired by the Hebrew-Christian belief that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Ps. 19:1). Nevertheless, no nature-centered version of Christianity can represent adequately the historical character of that faith. In the world of nature there is a faithful regularity of behavior which is reflected in the "laws" of such sciences as those of astronomy and physics. The success of the physical sciences in describing and dealing with these recurrent phenomena of the universe is so conspicuous that in every branch of human thought which aspires to the dignity of being a science the attempt is made to subsume all the data under general laws. But when attention is focused primarily upon the persistent regularities of the world, the nonrecurrent events of history become inexplicable or irrelevant. Precisely in the concrete actuality of particular historical happenings, however, Christianity finds meaning.<sup>3</sup> Christianity is sympathetic toward every religion in which nobleness is engendered by the contemplation of nature's vast wonder. It finds place within its own tradition for a consideration of the heavens which are the work of God's fingers, the moon and the stars which He has ordained. But in its historical character Christianity is more profound than any nature-centered faith.

#### EXPERIENCE-CENTERED RELIGION

The case is similar with religion which is centered in individual experience. This is a valid and widespread type of faith; it finds a legitimate place within the Christian tradition, but it does not constitute the essential characteristic of that religion.

The attractiveness and importance of an experience-centered religion will not be denied. If a nature-centered faith is based upon that which may be apprehended of God's work in the great external cosmos, this second type of religion is founded upon that which may be experienced of God's presence in the internal world of the soul. Here in the inner depths of life, men have found God from the earliest times until the present. The fundamental doctrine of the Upanishads, for example, is that the individual soul is identical with the world soul. This is expressed

<sup>2</sup> *Ethic*, V. 32 (tr. W. H. White and A. H. Stirling [4th ed., 1930], p. 274).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. C. H. Dodd, *History and the Gospel* (1938), p. 22.

repeatedly in the phrase, "Thou art It."<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is at the center of one's own being that the nature of ultimate reality may be apprehended and that union with the divine may be achieved. This is the basic teaching of mysticism in all ages and all lands, both without and within the Christian tradition. Plotinus states that "God, the Intellectual-Principle, exists within the Soul here,"<sup>5</sup> and therefore gives the counsel, "Withdraw into yourself and look."<sup>6</sup> Similarly Meister Eckhart declares, "Where the soul is there is God,"<sup>7</sup> and writes, "When I saw into myself I saw God in me."<sup>8</sup>

Modern liberalism makes religious experience basic, but deals with it in an empirical rather than a metaphysical fashion. In the development of this now widely adopted approach to religion the decisive work was done by Friedrich Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher found the essence of religion in "the feeling of an absolute dependence,"<sup>9</sup> and hence was able to define God as that universal reality which is disclosed in the sense of complete dependence. Since this consciousness of dependence is a fact of the individual's own experience, no outsider can deny it. It constitutes empirical evidence as real as any upon which the sciences are built. Religion's unassailable foundation lies in religious experience and theology's task is simply to analyze this experience and determine what doctrines properly describe it.

Both the mystical and the liberal forms of experiential religion have an authentic place within the Hebrew-Christian tradition. The Psalmist points to the mystic's path, "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10), and the healed blind man in the Gospel according to John speaks for all who have received spiritual sight from Christ, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25).

Nevertheless any interpretation of Christianity as fundamentally a religion of individual experience fails to do justice to its historical character. Classical mysticism is concerned with a realm of ultimate reality which is above earthly existence. To find union with the Absolute the soul must rise out of its entanglements in time and space. Pseudo-Dionysius gives the instruction, "I counsel that, in the earnest exercise of mystic contem-

<sup>4</sup> *Khangodya Upanishad*, VI, viii, 7; ix, 4, etc. (F. Max Müller, ed., *The Sacred Books of the East*, I, p. 101).

<sup>5</sup> Ennead, V, i, 5 (tr. Stephen MacKenna, *Plotinus, The Divine Mind* [1926], p. 6).

<sup>6</sup> Ennead, I, vi, 9 (tr. MacKenna, *Plotinus, The Ethical Treatises* [1917], p. 88).

<sup>7</sup> *Sermon, LXXXIII (Meister Eckhart)*, by Franz Pfeiffer [1857], tr. C. de B. Evans, p. 210.

<sup>8</sup> *Sister Katrei* (tr. Evans, p. 328).

<sup>9</sup> *Über die Religion* (3d ed., 1821), p. 110 (tr. John Oman, *On Religion* [1893], p. 106).

plation, thou leave behind the senses and the activities of the intellect and all things that the senses or the intellect can perceive,"<sup>10</sup> and Gregory the Great says, "The soul must first have learnt to shut out from its eyes all the phantasmata of earthly and heavenly images, and to spurn and tread under foot whatever presents itself to the thought from sight, hearing, smell, bodily touch or taste, so that it may seek itself interiorly as it is without these sensations."<sup>11</sup> If all earthly existence is to be so far fled as these statements indicate, history can hardly have any important meaning. It is but an extension of the web in which the soul is entangled and from which it must seek freedom.

Liberalism agrees with mysticism in finding God in individual religious experience, as we have seen, but does not agree with the radical disavowal of the value of earthly life. "Sense and intellect" are not to be abandoned with Dionysius as hindrances to the soul but are to be exercised and cultivated as helps to the spiritual life. Less radically and more subtly, nevertheless, liberalism disparages history. Precisely because it is the present moment of individual consciousness of God that is decisive, all past religious history is relatively unimportant. At best it constitutes only a supplementary verification of what is already known by immediate experience and at worst it is laden with so many accidental elements relevant only to earlier cultures that it is now almost unintelligible. Certainly there can be no finality in the past since religious experience, which is always the court of appeal, may take on new forms and reach new heights in the future. Nor is there any demonstrable finality about Christianity in comparison with other religious traditions. In every religion the sense of absolute dependence is felt and Western theological history expresses but one possible interpretation of that experience out of many. The adherent of another religion might feel that the interpretation there given was of equal or superior validity and certainly could not be confuted since his own religious experience is his final point of reference.

We may conclude, therefore, that a profound religious experience is an authentic part of Christianity and that such an experience provides a bond of fellowship with members of other faiths who also share a feeling of absolute dependence. But the distinctive historical character of Christianity is not yet understood.

<sup>10</sup> *The Mystical Theology*, 1 (tr. C. E. Rolt [1920], p. 191).

<sup>11</sup> *Divi Gregorii Liber secundus super Ezechiele Homelia*, xvii (v), 9 (*Sacri Gregorii magni Opera*, 1518); *Hasting's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IX, p. 94.

## HISTORY-CENTERED RELIGION

Christianity includes the dimensions of religion hitherto described. It has the breadth of a view directed outward toward the environing cosmos, in which it finds the manifestation of cosmic Mind. It has the depth of a look turned inward toward the hidden deeps of man's being where the presence of sustaining Power is felt. But there is a third dimension of length, in which man's view is directed along the highway of history. Indeed, man here is not only spectator but also inevitably participant. He not only looks at history but also lives inescapably in history. Yet, as we have shown, all forms of religion which are grounded primarily either in nature or in individual experience must regard history as irrelevant. Not so, Christianity. For it, history possesses the highest relevance. The Christian religion is grounded not only in nature and in religious experience, but also and most distinctively in history. What is meant by saying that in its most distinctive character Christianity is a historical religion? If it is only meant that the Christian movement has undergone a development which is traceable over some period of time, the same statement can be made of even such religions as Hinduism and Buddhism, whose goal is an escape from historical existence. The real significance of the historical character of Christianity lies in the fact that it finds the revelation of God not only in nature and in individual experience, but most decisively in history and thereby illumines all history with meaning and hope.

The revelation of God in history takes, to be sure, both a more general and a more specific form. In its more general form, the revelation of God in history may be apprehended even from points of view outside of Christianity. This general revelation consists in the manifestation of a righteousness of God which operates in history to make evil self-destructive and right at long last victorious. Under the name of moral law in history it is widely recognized. At least one non-Christian religion centers in it. That religion is Zoroastrianism, which regards the world as the battlefield of good and evil, traces the activity of the Wise Lord, Ahura Mazda, through successive ages, and expects a triumphant consummation of history in the ultimate victory of moral goodness. This is a truly prophetic interpretation of history and without doubt contributed some elements to Hebrew-Christian thought. But the clearest recognition of God's righteousness in history was attained only in the Hebrew-Christian religion itself. The Hebrew prophets perceived that in the long run, righteousness blesses and sin destroys. Their conclusion later was summed up in a single proverb:

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). The Christian apostle expressed the same insight: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

The Hebrew-Christian religion regards this general revelation of God's righteousness in history as only the background, however, for a more specific revelation. This more specific revelation likewise has come through history, but through a particular continuity of historical events. These happenings are those which constitute Hebrew-Christian history.<sup>12</sup> This history is recorded in a series of documents which together form the Hebrew-Christian scriptures. Indeed, it is the distinctive characteristic of these scriptures that they are primarily an account of certain great happenings. The Bible is not, in the first instance, a book of philosophy and such philosophy as it does contain is rather an interpretation of the meaning of observed events than a speculation based upon logical principles. Nor is it, essentially, a collection of devotional materials, and even the Psalms themselves frequently are based upon historical happenings as well as upon mystical experience. Fundamentally, the Bible records a history of peculiar significance.

This history begins to assume its distinctive character at least as far back as Abraham. Abraham is the first to bear the name of Hebrew (Gen. 14:13) and his historic migration remains for the Christian preacher a prime example of obedience to the leading of God: "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went . . . for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:8, 10). The descendents of Abraham, and in particular the children of Israel, continued to be responsive to the divine leading and as their history unfolded God did many wonderful things for them. His hand was clearly discernible in the leading forth of the people from the land of Egypt and in their deliverance from the power of enemies in Palestine who would have overcome them in war and misled them in religion. Thus as their history advanced the Hebrew people recorded in memory and document the series of mighty acts in which their God had been revealed. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" (Ps. 103:7).

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. C. C. Morrison, *What Is Christianity?* (1940), p. 66; John Macmurray, *The Clue to History* (1939), p. 15.

But the mighty doings of God not only were remembered in the past, they also were to be expected in the future. In past and present God remained always partly hidden. His wonderful deeds showed that He was the Ruler of history, yet much of history represented a flaunting of the will of man against the will of God. Therefore future acts of judgment were to be expected in which the sovereignty of God would be fully disclosed. This judgment certainly would fall upon all pagan nations which sinned against God in proud indifference to His will. Popular eschatology felt fully justified in anticipating a "day of the Lord" on which the heathen would be cast down and the faithful exalted. But in actuality the faithful were themselves unfaithful. The Hebrews knew God's law but departed from it. Therefore, as was clear to the profounder understanding of the great prophets, not only the heathen nations but also Israel and Judah would have to undergo punishment. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! . . . Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" (Amos 5:18, 20).

Although there was only darkness to be expected on the day of God's judgment, there might yet be lightness beyond it. God is not only a God of impartial justice, but also of unalterable love. His wrath must be revealed in punishment but his mercy also will be shown in an ultimate restoration (Hos. 11:1, 3, 8, 11):

"When Israel was a child, I came to love him,  
And from Egypt I called him. . . .  
It was I who taught Ephraim to walk;  
I took them up in my arms; . . .  
How can I give you up, O Ephraim!  
How surrender you, O Israel! . . .  
They shall come fluttering like a bird from Egypt,  
And like a dove from the land of Assyria;  
And I will bring them back to their homes,"  
Is the oracle of the Lord.<sup>13</sup>

But these anticipations for the future were couched in a more specific and personal form than yet has been indicated. They came to a focus in a Messianic hope. The Hebrew religion expected a Christ. It was not entirely alone in this, for some degree of Messianism appeared also in Egyptian, Roman and Persian thought. An Egyptian Messianic writing known as the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* described the ideal king as follows:

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<sup>13</sup> An American Translation.



He brings cooling to the flame. It is said He is the Shepherd of all men. There is no evil in His heart. When His herds are few, He passes the day to gather them together, their hearts being fevered.<sup>14</sup>

Virgil hoped for the birth of a wonderful infant who would usher in a new age:

Now is come the last age of the song of Cumae; the great line of the centuries begins anew. . . . Only do thou, pure Lucina, smile on the birth of the Child, under whom the iron brood shall first cease, and a golden race spring up throughout the world! . . . He shall have the gift of divine life, . . . and shall sway a world to which His Father's virtues have brought peace.<sup>15</sup>

And Zoroastrianism looked forward to the coming of a future deliverer, Saoshyant, who would accomplish "the renovation of the universe."<sup>16</sup>

The language of the Hebrew expectation often was similar and hopes may have found re-enforcement in mutual sharing. But that which was occasional, sometimes secondary and usually peripheral in other religions became characteristic and central in the Hebrew faith. A Davidic shepherd king will come (Ezek. 34:23):

I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

A wondrous Child will be born whose reign will be universal righteousness and whose name will be "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). A transcendent figure "like unto a son of man" (Dan. 7:13) will hold the last judgment and usher in the age to come:

This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness, . . . .  
 And who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden, . . . .  
 He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall,  
 And he shall be the light of the Gentiles,  
 And the hope of those who are troubled of heart . . . .  
 And the word of his mouth slays all the sinners,  
 And all the unrighteous are destroyed from before his face . . . .  
 And the righteous and elect shall be saved on that day, . . . .  
 And the Lord of Spirits will abide over them,  
 And with that Son of Man shall they eat  
 And lie down and rise up forever and ever.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> James H. Breasted, *The Dawn of Conscience* (1933), p. 198.

<sup>15</sup> *Eclouge*, IV (tr. H. Rushton Fairclough, *Loeb Classical Library* [1916-18], I, pp. 29, 31).

<sup>16</sup> *Bundahish*, XXX, 17; *Dinkard*, VII, x, 10 (*The Sacred Books of the East*, V, p. 125; XLVII, p. 114); cf. M. N. Dhalla, *History of Zoroastrianism* (1938), p. 426.

<sup>17</sup> I Enoch 46:3; 48:4; 62:2, 13f. (R. H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* [1913], II, pp. 214, 216, 227f.).

So extensive was the development of the Messianic hope in Jewish thought that to trace its ramifications through the canonical, apocryphal, pseudepigraphical and rabbinical literature is an inquiry in itself. It is sufficient here to have shown that the historical character of the Hebrew religion reaches a climax in the expectation of a Christ. His coming will constitute the most decisive act of God in history and will usher in the consummation of history.

It is the Christian faith that God's most decisive act in history has taken place. The Christ has come. The entire New Testament is unintelligible apart from this claim. Its message is that the expectations of the centuries have been fulfilled. Jesus said, "The time is fulfilled" (Mark 1:15), "the Reign of God is now in your midst" (Luke 17:21).<sup>18</sup> Paul preached good news which had been promised long before by the prophets and now had become a fact (cf. Rom. 1:1f).

To be sure, the Christ who came was not recognized by all people. He was "foolishness" to the Greeks, as Paul said, because to the Greek mind history itself had no meaning. Greek thought was concerned with the understanding of nature and with the intellectual or mystical apprehension of the absolute, hence had no expectation of a Christ nor understanding of Him when He came. On the other hand, Christ was a "stumbling block" to the Jews, because while they believed that a Messiah would come they were unable to recognize their particular expectations in the face of Jesus. Looking for the Son of David, who would be a military leader, they stumbled over the strange King who rode meekly into Jerusalem upon a colt. Expecting the Son of Man, whose voice would speak in accents of judgment, they misunderstood the Silent Man who answered His own accusers not a word. Believing that their Messiah would be the Son of God (II Esdras 7:28f) they could not think that God would abandon His Son to death. But while the Christ who came seemed to disappoint men's hopes, in actuality He more than fulfilled them. As the descendant of David (Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:31) the process of Jewish history was summed up and completed in Him and the law and the prophets were not destroyed but fulfilled (cf. Matt. 5:17). Like the Son of Man "who revealeth all that is hidden" (I En. 46:3), His judgment was "that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light" (John 3:19). Condemned to crucifixion by His own people, He so

<sup>18</sup> Tr. James Moffatt.

died that a Roman centurion recognized the Son of God in a Man upon a cross (Mark 15:39). Thus "unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks," the crucified Christ is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:23f).<sup>19</sup>

The most decisive act of God in history has taken place, but the ultimate consummation of history has not yet come to pass. In one sense the kingdom of God was established by Christ, in another sense it has not yet been established. It has come but it is yet to come in the future. Both statements are fully justified by Jesus' own words. On the one hand He said, "But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." It "has reached you already" (Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20). On the other hand He taught men to pray to the Father, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2) and He said as He drank of the cup at the Last Supper with the disciples, "I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mark 14:25; Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:18). The kingdom for whose establishment Jesus was anointed is both present and future. Efforts repeatedly have been made to explain away either the one aspect of it or the other. Both belong to the Christian understanding of history. Together they constitute the Christian clue to the meaning of history. For Christianity is a historical religion not only in the sense that it finds the revelation of God in history, but also in the fact that it recognizes this revelation as giving meaning to all of history. The true meaning of our historical existence has been disclosed in Christ. The fulfillment of that meaning awaits His ultimate victory in the consummation of the ages.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, II (1943), p. 54.

# Building Medical Highways in the Desert

EDWARD H. HUME

"Make straight in the desert a highway for our God"

**T**HE matter of communications stands out as one of the paramount concerns of human society after the war. Highways of every sort are projected, for routes beneath the sea and on its surface, beneath the land and on its surface, and significant routes through the air. To the Christian enterprise a great challenge is sounded as it spreads its highways in every direction.

This record has to do with the builders of medical highways across deserts, through tropical jungles, in the midst of rice fields, and wherever else there is human need. The builders of these highways have gone out to that task in answer to the question once asked at the Pool of Bethesda: "Wouldest thou be made whole?"

## I. THEY ARE BUILDING HIGHWAYS IN AFRICA

Doctor Underhill tells of an African youth who was employed as cook in a missionary's home. Each week he put aside some of the coins that came to him as his regular wage, and learned, as he did so, the old truth that the laborer is worthy of his hire. After two years of service, he was given leave for a visit to his family home, and got back to the village of his fathers and ancestors to find everyone eager to see him. The whole village turned out to welcome him. Presently, discovering that he had brought with him a bag of coins, something that looked like a fortune, the clan got around him;

"Now what you have brought you will share with us, for we do everything in common."

The boy, conscious of his training in Christian individualism, refused to share his wealth and, within an hour, there arose a marked feeling of tension. The boy went to bed unhappy and found the family and friends sullen on the following day. On the second night, when he went to his bed, he started as he saw lying on his pillow the horn of a deer stuffed with scorpions, centipedes, and a small venomous snake. No wonder he started! Now the village would have its revenge. They had sent for

a witch doctor, who had devised a curse to put on the wayward youth. On the following day he sought his dearest friend and took counsel with him.

"Yes, they have put a curse on you, it means that you will die, unless"— He began to reflect a moment—"unless you will go with me immediately a few miles down the river to visit that more powerful witch doctor who lives at the junction of the two rivers. He can devise a means for freeing you."

Off they went and found the famous man, who insisted on his fee—a young goat and a chicken—before he would start his incantations. The goat was sent to the witch doctor's house, the youth was immersed up to his chin in the swiftly moving current of the river, the witch doctor cut the chicken's neck over the boy's head and let the blood drop on his face and neck, saying,

"As the stream washes away the blood that has dripped on you, so these my incantations will drive away the curse that was put on you yesterday."

Relieved and consciously buoyed up by the experience, the youth dried himself and hastened back to the missionary's home where he told him the whole story. The missionary said to him: "If only you had come to me when you discovered that deer's horn, we could have relieved you immediately; don't you remember reading in God's word, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good'? The Christian does not let himself be depressed by these formulae of a magician, but finds a new road, a new highway, by which to travel to overcome them."

## 2. THEY ARE BUILDING HIGHWAYS IN ARABIA

Doctor Mylrea had been busy in his hospital in Kuwait at the far northern end of the Persian Gulf for thirty years when, one day, word came to him that a motor car which was traveling from Basra across the desert to Kuwait, carrying an American diplomat and his missionary colleague, Mr. Bilkerk, as interpreter, had been fired on by bandits and that in the encounter which followed Mr. Bilkerk had been shot and killed. The Sultan of Kuwait was told about the episode, organized a large force of his regular troops, who went out into the desert in many directions, located the band of bandits, attacked and captured them all. By order of the Sultan, the prisoners were brought back to the mission hospital, where Doctor Mylrea received them personally. He gave himself without stint to bandaging and splinting the fractured limbs, operated on those who

had wounds in chest and abdomen, and took personal care of them during their convalescence. At the end of a month he sat down beside the bandit leader, and looking him squarely in the eyes, asked,

"Why did you kill my colleague, Mr. Bilkerk?"

The robber chief was startled and turned his eyes away for a moment, then asked,

"How did you know?"

"I have not lived thirty years in the desert without having friends who bring me news from everywhere."

The bandit chief moved restlessly and said:

"You took care of us all yourself! You bandaged our wounds yourself and gave us the treatment we needed." Then after a moment more he went on, "And you never poisoned our food!"

"Our religion won't let us do that," was Doctor Mylrea's reply. Some moments elapsed, and finally, under his breath, the robber leader said,

"I never heard of a religion like that."

If Doctor Mylrea had gone on, he would have told that bandit of the teaching of the Master: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

He was building highways of Christian example through the Arabian desert.

### 3. THEY ARE BUILDING HIGHWAYS IN BURMA

We have all been reading the thrilling story, *Burma Surgeon*, and are not surprised that Doctor Seagrave earned recognition from the military leaders of several nations. How little we have turned our thought to one of the great contributions that he and his wife made through all the years at Namkham. Few elements in Doctor Seagrave's life, which thousands of American readers have come to know through his vivid book, can compare with his great achievement in training nurses:

"Girls of ten or twelve races continually reported in the school, each with their own language entirely unintelligible to the other race group; the only common language is Burmese, which they learn in the school—and also in the bazaars—and in the whole history of the school, we have had only four pupil nurses who were actual Burmese. The largest race group was Kachin, the next Shan, the next Karen, and then a smattering of other tribes. . . ."

How Doctor Seagrave had to convince British officers, military and



medical, that these nurses were fully capable of giving transfusions and hypodermic injections, and, better still, of keeping up their own morale as well as that of patients and soldiers, while never failing to discharge their professional duties at the highest possible level.

Doctor Seagrave has been building a highway of teaching across the hills and through the jungles of Burma, providing a high standard of professional training for these young women who have proved to be such apt students.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations."

#### 4. THEY ARE BUILDING HIGHWAYS IN CHINA

Out in front of Hunan-Yale Hospital in Changsha, Doctor Phillips Greene was standing with a group of students when a strange ambulance came into the hospital enclosure. A man was walking toward the hospital slowly with a pole across his shoulders and a large rice basket suspended by ropes from each end of the pole. Ordinarily the double load would weigh 150 pounds, but today one of the baskets held some household implements and clothes and an old soiled comforter; in the other basket there was a little Chinese boy of about four years. The mother walked along beside the coolie and brought the child up to the doctor, who asked,

"What is your boy's name?"

"We call him 'Little Basket Boy Lo.'"

"Tell me about him. How long has he been ill? Do you always keep him in a basket?"

"My first five children died in infancy, and when this child was born, I went with incense and candles to the City Temple at the far south-east corner of Changsha. The priest saw my distress and told me what to do: 'Just as the big rice baskets enclose and hold safely the load of life-giving rice, so you must use a rice basket as your little boy's crib. Let him stay in it by day and sleep in it by night until he gets to be a strong boy.' I have followed his injunctions carefully."

When Doctor Greene picked up the child to have a look at him, the mother seemed impatient to get him back into his special crib. The child was a patient in the hospital children's ward for a long time while doctors and nurses made friends with him and his mother.

But the hospital was more than a center of treatment. The generous American friend who provided the funds for its erection had made it a condition of his gift that the hospital should be a center of teaching, and

an institution to be locally managed and supported by the community. Even before the building was completed a new structure of international friendship was started.

The Yale University Mission, finding in Governor Tan Yen-kai a warm friend, worked out a plan of co-operation. Doctor F. C. Yen and Doctor Hume, with the support of the Governor and a group of the leading gentry of Changsha, brought into being what was unquestionably the first co-operative enterprise for medical education in China. The Chinese group nominated half of the board of managers, and the Yale University Mission the other half. Under the direction of this local board, the education of medical students and nurses went forward rapidly. Starting in 1914, the co-operative relationship continued for a decade and was renewed in 1924 for another ten years. In 1934 the medical school, the hospital, and the school of nursing were entrusted entirely to a local board of managers, although the Chinese members regularly invited several of the University Mission group to sit with them. Little wonder, when the Japanese occupied the hospital for a few days at Christmas time in 1941, that, after the Chinese artillery assembled on Yolu Shan, that familiar hill across the river, there was excitement among the Hunan artillery officers. The General had given orders that zero hour would be at 3 A. M., and that they would have to shell the Hunan-Yale Hospital to drive the Japanese out from the building which they had used as an observation tower.

"Sir, you are in command," said the junior officers to the commanding general, "but you are not a native of this Province. That hospital is *our* hospital, and we should shrink from shelling it. Let us drive the enemy out of the city without injuring *our* hospital."

Those doctors at the hospital were doing more than providing medical and surgical treatment. They were building highways of friendship through the green valleys of Hunan. "I have called you not servants, but friends," were the words of our Master.

Here, then, are some of our medical missionaries building highways across vast areas of this needy world; highways of substituting good for evil, highways of Christian example, highways of teaching, highways of friendship. Truly they are responding to the question at Bethesda—"Wouldest thou be made whole?"

# Three Levels of Peacemaking

A. C. McGIFFERT, JR.

**I** HAVE only one child, my son," replied the Greek mother to a Swiss Red Cross worker. "Last month I had three children. But there wasn't enough food to go round. So I had to let my daughters die."

"How did you decide which of the children to keep?"

"Oh, I had to keep my son, so he could revenge his sisters."

Governments and churches are both working on the tragic problem symbolized by the desolate Greek mother. They are working on three levels of peacemaking:

1. To bring about a peace that will prevent or postpone the recurrence of such horror;
2. To reconstruct the institutions that can rapidly incorporate the victims of war into the fabric of a wholesome life;
3. To minister directly to starved bodies and crushed spirits.

In their planning for peace on these three levels, governments and churches engage in parallel activities. I shall consider these parallel activities primarily in their American expression.

## I

First of all, there are the over-all peace plans of the government officials. Thus far official statements about the aims of the war—which, of course, imply the nature of the peacemaking—have been confined to the most general of statements. The first of these statements was made by President Roosevelt in his message to Congress on January 6, 1941: "In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we must look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms."

Seven months after the formulation of the Four Freedoms and still before the entry of the United States into the war, President Roosevelt joined with Prime Minister Churchill in a second of these over-all statements about the peace, subsequently subscribed to by a number of the United Nations. This Atlantic Charter included the enunciation of such principles as: no territorial aggrandizement, the right of peoples to choose the form

of government under which they will live, access on equal terms to the raw materials of the world, economic collaboration, abandonment of the use of force. This Charter is "a statement of general principles rather than a blueprint for a new world order."

On November 1, 1943, the governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China made a joint declaration at Moscow, which "recognized the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organization . . . . for the maintenance of international peace and security." *The New York Times* remarked that the Moscow Conference constituted the first peace conference for the settlement of the second World War.

Later in the same month at Cairo President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek issued a joint communique which again disclaimed territorial expansion and declared that territories stolen from China by Japan shall be restored to the Republic of China. At Teheran in December, 1943, the Big Three of Moscow declared that they would welcome all nations, large and small, as they may choose to come into the world family of democratic nations.

As the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace points out in its Fourth Report (January, 1944), these general statements move in the direction of one of the two ways to plan political organization: "to draft a constitution in broad, firm outlines and leave it to the future to fill in the details." The second way is to "begin with the details and work out through them to a completed whole." The Commission cites the Conference of the United Nations on Food and Agriculture, held at Hot Springs, Virginia, in May, 1943, as an instance of the second method.

Thus, with a certain acceleration of pace, broadening of horizon and sharpening of focus, governments make and disclose plans for international security.

## II

The churches are likewise thinking about, studying and preparing for the making of peace on this same generalized level. Liston Pope in December, 1941, analyzed thirty-four statements by church bodies and religious leaders embodying proposals for world order. All but four of these statements from Europe and America, ecumenical and denominational gatherings, Protestant and Catholic sources have been issued since the present war began. Outstanding leadership in this over-all thinking about peacemaking has been provided by the Federal Council's Commission to

Study the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace. (Why wasn't Lincoln's phrase in his Second Inaugural used, "a just and *lasting* peace"?) The National Study Conference, sponsored by this Commission at Delaware, Ohio, in March, 1942, dealt with the spiritual, political, economic and social aspects of the problem. The Delaware Statement set the problem of peace in the larger context of the moral law and order of the universe, the need of true community, the exorcism both of a holier than thou attitude and of the spirit of retaliation.

Delaware also issued a shorter statement of Political Propositions, which have come to be popularly known as the Six Pillars of Peace. These include the aim of providing a political framework for continuing collaboration of the United Nations and in due course of neutral and enemy nations, the placing of responsibility upon nations for economic acts which have international implications, the provision of flexibility in the treaty structure, the goal of autonomy for subject people, the control of military establishments and religious freedom. These six pillars "are designed to support the house of international co-operation, which we must build on the foundation of interdependence."

In July, 1943, the same Commission of the Federal Council issued a Christian Message on World Order from the International Round Table of Christian Leaders at Princeton. It sought to give to "a weary and frustrated world a clear statement of a goal toward which to strive," based on principles which are fundamental to any world order. It also set forth a program of next steps to be taken. In addition it had the courage to suggest the application of Christian principles of internationalism in three specific areas: collaboration with Russia, the treatment of Germany and a settlement for East Asia.

Like the parallel peacemaking activities of government this vigorous planning on the part of the churches remains for the present on the level of generalization. Yet even in the realm of the formulation of general principles and general applications much still remains to be done by representatives of both government and churches. And even before this article appears further enlightening statements may be expected from both parties.

Another activity in the American churches on this first level of peacemaking deserves attention. The "sobering but inspiring challenge of peace" (Princeton Message) aroused one of the great American denominations to vigorous and timely activity in the interest of awakening the mind and

conscience of its people to the Christian contribution to peacemaking. The Methodist Bishops' Crusade for a New World Order seeks to develop, clarify and mobilize the sentiment of all members of the Church in favor of a righteous and lasting peace, and to bring that great body of sentiment and influence to bear at the place where decisions regarding the peace are to be made and before the decisions are made.

### III

On a second level of peacemaking planning by the churches also parallels planning by government, although on this level governmental plans have already in part issued in action. This is the level of social institutions and social control.

Governments foresaw the chaos which would ensue in occupied territories when the heel of the invader was lifted from them. In order to provide adequate social control in these several areas, AMG (Allied Military Government of Occupied Territories) was brought into being. Schools of Military Government have been established by the War Department for the training of military officers. Men who already had experience in public utilities, or as lawyers, civil and sanitary engineers or were acquainted with foreign countries by reason of former residence or travel have entered these schools as students. Additional training centers have been organized in various colleges for the training of younger men for subordinate positions in military government.

The curriculum of one of the advanced military government schools includes an extraordinary diversity of courses, for the maintenance of social order is a complex function. These military governors will need to understand the geographical and social background of the particular area for which they are being trained, its cultural characteristics. They must know about its forms of government, political parties, legislative procedures, its judicial system, government finance and taxation, money and banking, government credit agencies, insurance companies, natural resources. Agricultural administration calls for some understanding of land tenure, farm organizations, soil productivity, distribution and processing of agricultural products. The organization and government control of industry and commerce will need to be understood as well as employment and employment agencies, wages and hours, unions and social insurance. These prospective military governors must also be given some familiarity with public works and utilities, docks and sewerage in the area to which they will be assigned.



They will need to know as much as they can about the transportation system, rail, motor and air; pipe lines and shipping; communications, postal system, radio, press and motion pictures. The organization of public health, medical care, water supply; public safety, the police agencies and policies with regard to vice control, public order, degree of enforcement, penal institutions will be studied. Education, its organization and control, financing and personnel will also receive attention, although there are other agencies at work on this problem looking toward the longer future. And finally there is the organization of public welfare: relief and public assistance; institutions, welfare personnel and the like.

Training of this sort evidently visualizes many situations abroad in which, when the invading army is driven out, no local responsible leadership will be immediately available and our military governors will have to take temporary command until local administration can again begin to function.

#### IV

The churches are also making plans for peace on this second level of order and institution which parallel on a smaller scale the work of AMG. The Federal Council of Churches and the Foreign Missions Conference have joined in setting up the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction to implement this Christian concern for the re-establishment of order and activity on the part of the churches and missions in the presently occupied as well as the enemy countries. This committee refers to its work as the "administration of church help." It will include the restoration of ruined churches and other buildings such as parish halls, hospitals and schools. Funds will be supplied to churches which have been disorganized or had their funds confiscated. Leadership will be trained and sent abroad to reconstitute Christian organizations and movements. Churches will have to be provided with pastors in places where the ministry has been dispersed and training for the ministry has almost ceased. Subsidies and personnel will also be needed for theological seminaries. Christian relief agencies, such as home mission bodies, will need financial assistance and perhaps leadership if they are to get started again in their service to the poor and the sick. Foreign mission boards will require help in becoming re-established so that they can resume responsibility for what have come to be known as "orphan missions." Perhaps subsidies will be needed to start up again the production of Christian literature.

As with government planning for peace on this level the aim of our

churches is to provide temporary aid in money and services in order to help the institutions of the Christian religion to get a fresh start after the devastation they have suffered. Our churches will exercise less direct control over the aided churches abroad than will be the case with military government; indeed, the assistance given by churches to churches will be that of counseling and offering rather than of management. But as in the case of military government, the concern of our churches will be for the restoration and ordering of the institutional aspects of life rather than for a direct approach to individuals in need of personal help. Likewise, as with military government, it is anticipated that this church help will be withdrawn as rapidly as the aided churches and other Christian organizations can take over their own management and support.

It should be added that the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction in this magnificent endeavor will serve not so much as an administrative agency as a clearing house of information, a forum for consultation, a planning and co-ordinating agency and a medium of communication.

## V

On the third level of peacemaking, as on the second, both governments and churches foresee a temporary emergency activity which, it is hoped, will soon be taken over by the enemy and occupied countries themselves. But, whereas on the second level the peacemaking proceeds indirectly by the construction and reconstruction of institutions, on the third level the peacemaking touches directly the individual victims of the war and the occupation.

In November, 1943, an agency of our government known as the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations, directed by former Governor Lehman, of New York, was replaced by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). Forty-four nations signed this agreement at their meeting in Atlantic City. They made a joint commitment to pool their available efforts and resources to meet the emergency needs created by the war in areas from which the enemy is driven and to help the liberated areas get on their feet again and so end the need for relief.

## VI

On the third level of peacemaking the work of the churches is infinitesimal in comparison with that planned by government. In fact, in many areas of our American church life there is as yet no parallel planning

whatsoever. To be sure, the Quakers, through their tried and tested American Friends Service Committee, are already at work in areas opened up by our troops and they are planning for more extensive operations. Other Christian agencies and associations, including some of the Foreign Missionary Boards and the Social Action Councils, are beginning to make plans. But thus far the consecrated mind of the run of church people and even of the leaders has not faced the need of spiritual rehabilitation nor taken thought of the spiritual blights in areas over which the shadow of war has swept back and forth.

It is one thing to strengthen the institutions which will in turn undergird the life of their own members (let the Church be the Church). It is another thing to proffer help to people on the basis of their need without discrimination as to whether they are church people or not, whether Protestant Christian or not, whether of the white race or not. It is one thing to feed these people. That is too vast an undertaking for private agencies to carry on. It is another thing to deal with the revival of their will and grit to live; with the recovery of their capacity to trust others, which is perhaps the most terrible casualty of war and occupation; with the conversion of emotions of revenge into constructive channels; with the incorporation of uprooted individuals into wholesome groups.

Governments, providing relief in the mass, can at best do a kind of large-scale service. Countless individuals will fall through the meshes of this large-scale activity. Thousands of smaller communities are likely to be sketchily treated. Here is where the spirit of Christian service can render untold help.

Christian churches usually rise to the challenge of a great social need. Frequently, however, they wait until that need has come to a crisis before they bestir themselves. Occasionally, they get into action so late as to be able to do no more than perform a post-mortem survey or analysis of the social disaster.

Once in a while, however, church people determine not to be caught napping, but to get ready ahead of time to meet a social need which they foresee taking shape in the near future. Such has been the case with one of the Christian institutions of this country, the Pacific School of Religion, and its two neighboring theological seminaries in Berkeley, California, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and the Starr King School for the Ministry.

These seminaries have undertaken to provide special training for

men and women who will be needed to carry on an emergency, short-term service of spiritual rehabilitation. They have gathered together a group of students who are persons of courage, sensitivity, patience and creative imagination, from whose hearts has been exorcised the demon of sentimentality and the spirit of the crusader intent upon "putting over" the American way.

The course of study for this new type of missionary work began last September and runs for forty-eight weeks. The average age of the students is thirty. They are preparing to serve either in central Europe (Germany, Austria) or in China.

The curriculum for such a special experimental course obviously could not be modeled on the traditional pattern of a seminary or of a missionary training institution. Instead, the schools of Military Government provided a significant example. The curriculum includes a regional study, designed to familiarize the students with the history, culture, mores, ideologies, family and business life, as well as the religious institutions of the area to which they hope to go. The appropriate languages are also mastered, not with a view to reading the literature of China or central Europe, but to carry on conversation in Chinese or German.

The Program of Training also lays great emphasis on the social studies. These will be of immense value to the rehabilitation worker. He must understand the principles and processes of psychological and spiritual reconditioning of persons suffering from shock, despair, depression, revenge and hatred. He must learn the principles and procedures of what has come to be known as group work. He must know how to analyze a community and how to create a sense of community. The administration and organization of field operations also claim his attention, as well as the cultivation of skills of the type used in occupational therapy—although almost any skill, craft or art will prove useful, and is available in the curriculum.

For the sake of convenience, these rehabilitation students are referred to in the masculine gender. Actually several women are also taking the course. Indeed, one of the striking features of the student body is the presence of several young married couples. All of the students are engaged in field work in the desperate, chaotic areas near Berkeley inhabited by defense workers. Frightful as are the conditions in these defense areas—and experienced social workers declare they have never seen anything as dreadful—they are as nothing compared with what Christian workers will

face abroad; yet they are difficult enough to provide severe training experience.

A final course in this special curriculum entitled "Faith for Living" seeks to ground the students in the resources of the Christian faith and way of life. They will need strengthened inner spiritual braces to resist the external pressures of the discouragement, frustration and misery which will be their daily environment. The wisdom of including a course on faith for living in the training of these prospective rehabilitation workers is underscored by a recent statement of standards for Christian relief work made by a Chinese member of the World Student Christian Federation. Christian rather than secular workers are desired even for work with non-Christians because they give greater attention to individuals and keep in sight the personality of the persons being helped. Workers with Christian discipline behind them are not so easily discouraged; their patience does not go quickly sour. They do not become cynical if a considerable proportion of the people with whom they deal show traits of ingratitude and corruption. They recognize the need of setting up the necessary processes of community life. They have a sense of mission which will hold them to difficult tasks through fire and high water. They are likely to have a redeeming sense of humility with regard to their own importance: a tough skin covering a humble and tender heart.

How and when and where these trained Christian rehabilitation workers are to be used remains to be seen. They do not themselves know. They have undertaken their course of training in the faith that the Christian mind and conscience will want to send representatives to work on the third or personal level of peacemaking as well as on the institutional and international levels. Should the major denominations let this opportunity to carry on peacemaking on this level go by default, it is not unlikely that the American Friends Service Committee will use many of these specially trained students. Or they may be employed by UNRRA. There would be nothing inappropriate in their serving in a governmental organization. In fact, they could do an excellent piece of work there. Many other people can be used by government, however, who lack the special spiritual equipment and capacity of these students. The churches will be missing a great chance if they do not use them.

Two problems are posed by the experimental school in Berkeley. In a period of social revolution should not prospective missionaries, except in highly specialized fields, be given a short-term training and sent out

for an initial short-term service? Once on the field these short-term workers can demonstrate whether they have the flexibility, imagination and resourcefulness to justify their remaining permanently on the field. Those who possess these capabilities might then be returned to the home base for further training and the others allowed to return and remain at home. In a time when the loss of a sense of community is one of the major social characteristics, should not much more emphasis be laid on social studies in the preparation of missionaries, at least as a supplement to the literary and historical emphases in much current missionary training? An analysis of the curriculum of the Program of Training for Postwar Rehabilitation Abroad now being conducted by the Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley and of the effectiveness of the workers trained therein might help to answer both these questions.

*A Bell for Adano*, Richard Halsey's novel dealing with military government at work, suggests the double aspect of rehabilitation on the third level of peacemaking. Quite as much as food, the inhabitants of Adano craved a bell to take the place of the town bell which Mussolini had had melted into cannon. The bell symbolized their community to them. It performed a spiritual ministry. Out of the rehabilitation work after the last war comes a similar story. One of the first things those in charge of rehabilitation did for a certain Belgian village was to build a motion picture house. The village had never had one before; indeed, the cinema was rare in those parts. This brand-new and quite-novel motion picture house was intended to serve as a symbol of the possibility of newness of life ahead for the inhabitants instead of the deadness and terror of their recent years. Next, using the plans from the Ministry of the Interior the rehabilitation authorities reconstructed, stone for stone, old St. Martin's Church, as a symbol that the past still existed and could be picked up again despite the intervening terror.

Alongside of governmental activities of relief of hunger and restoration of health the churches also on this third level have a profound spiritual contribution to make to individual hope and to community morale.



# Does Might, in Fact, Make Right?

ROBERT E. FITCH

**I**T IS an old cry, "Why do the righteous suffer, and why do the wicked prosper?" And the answer to it of the realist is an old answer: that there is neither righteousness, nor unrighteousness on this earth, but only power and weakness; and that, if one must talk of moral standards, then let it be recognized that, in point of fact, it is might that makes right, and that, apart from this right of might, there is no right whatsoever.

To this sort of talk the idealist has traditionally made a weak reply, "Well, it isn't real right, anyway." But usually he has been constrained to admit that it is might which, in fact, rules the course of events in this world. Accordingly, he has counseled a sort of ineffectual nobility of conduct for the duration of this life, while cherishing the faith that in the life to come there shall be recompense for wickedness and reward for virtue. Thus he surrenders the "victorious life" on this earth to the apostles of brute power, and trusts that he shall find his own "victory" hereafter.

Nor is it of any help to argue that, at least in this second World War, the cause of true righteousness will triumph through the agency of the United Nations. Here the realist can point out easily enough that the United Nations must conquer because of their superiority in power: in natural resources, in man power, in geographic area, in technology, in control of the sea and of the air, in just plain numbers of everything.

The issue involved here is a critical one for all Christians. If, indeed, we are to win this war—as the press encourages us to believe—through the sheer massing of might, then let us rid ourselves at once of all sentimental delusions about ideals, and put our trust where plainly it belongs—in "reeking tube and iron shard." But, if more than the might which we wield, there is an eternal right which is above it, and which, on this earth, is the source both of weakness and of power, then let us come to know the true God which we should serve, and not bow down in idolatrous worship before the instruments which He has placed in our hands.

## I

The faith that it is might which, in fact, makes right is an ancient one—as ancient as all human speculation on the laws and purposes of history.

Probably the classic statement of the doctrine is that of Thrasymachus in the first two books of Plato's *Republic*. "Justice is the interest of the stronger!"—so he puts the matter concisely and cynically. There is no ideal justice; there is only *de facto* justice, and its character is determined by those who have the power to define it and to administer it, by those who control the courts and the armies and the police and the agencies for molding public opinion. This justice, however it may vary from age to age in direction and in detail, has always one enduring trait—it serves the interest of those who are in power. Thus those who have the might decide, in fact, what, in their day and in their time, shall be right, and any other right is only the idle dream of saints and of suckers.

Another set of formulations comes out of the troubled Renaissance Italy of Machiavelli and out of the turbulent seventeenth-century England of Thomas Hobbes. It was Hobbes who laid down the psychological dogma, "I put for a general inclination of all mankind a perpetual and restless desire of Power after Power." This looked like a fair enough descriptive generalization for a day when Roundhead and Cavalier fought one another for supremacy, and when the iron rule of a Cromwell seemed to match, in arbitrary despotism, the more artistic caprices of the Stuart monarchy. About a century earlier, Machiavelli found the same chaos of conflicting interests in his own country; nor could he see any way out of it other than for some new and unscrupulous Duce to seize power, and, by force and by guile, to impose his "justice" upon the people.

The nineteenth century saw a recrudescence of the doctrine. Whether with sound logic or false, it derived fresh support from the theory of biological evolution, with its preachment of the struggle for existence, and natural selection, or, as Darwin later appropriated the phrase from Spencer, the survival of the fittest. The irony of it was that Darwin originally borrowed his notions of struggle and of competition from his study of an economist—Malthus—and then proceeded to read into the animal kingdom the savagery he had first found in human society. Thus Darwin wrote, as it were, a capitalistic biology. How different might have been his hypothesis if, instead, he had steeped himself in Saint-Simon and the Utopian Socialists! But once his work was done, it was possible to lend to the teaching that might makes right an authority that was now "scientific" because it rested on the apparent say-so of a biologist rather than on the dictum of a mere social philosopher.

Nietzsche, who was the heir of German romanticism and of the vol-

untarism of Schopenhauer, built, with imaginative genius, upon the foundations of Darwin. All life, then, is an inhuman struggle for supremacy. There is only one virtue, Power; only one vice, Weakness. There are but two classes of men, the Strong and the Botched. The crown of victory is reserved for those who, disdainful of pity, charity and repentance, and fearing neither to suffer nor to inflict suffering, press relentlessly on to the goal and establish their rule in an aura of voluptuous arrogance. Comes, at last, the day of the Superman, that great blonde beast of prey, before whom shall bow down in terror all the kingdoms of the earth.

In the fullness of time—in our own time—we have witnessed the incarnation of the Superman—not quite so blonde as he should be, and yet sufficiently a 'beast of prey—Adolf Hitler!

It does not take a great deal of ingenuity to find historical evidence in support of the thesis that might makes right. If the obverse of this doctrine is the belief that the righteous suffer, then look at the history of the Hebrews. Here is at least *one* of God's chosen people—chosen to give us religious truth, as Athens was chosen to give us philosophy and Rome was chosen to give us laws—and yet the whole record of its existence is one of continual suffering, defeat, frustration. The Jews are enslaved by the Egyptians, held subject to the Philistines, conquered by the Syrian, the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman, persecuted by the Christian, murdered by the Nazi—is the end really in sight? Surely it is a morally meaningless world in which a people once famous for its prophets, and now famous for its artists, financiers, philanthropists, scientists, jurists, writers, statesmen, should be in perpetual bondage to the hatred and villainy of its fellow men!

On the other side of the picture, it seems apparent that, in the history of western civilization, our great systems of right have rested on the authority of power politics. It was the far-flung might of Rome that gave the European peoples their first enduring experience of justice and of orderly human relations; and, in modern times—at last we begin to be aware of the fact!—it has been the might of the British Empire which has borne the chief brunt of maintaining some degree of peace and equity among the nations of the earth. After this second World War, one may hazard the guess, it will be the combined co-operative might of the Four Great Powers that shall, for some time, prescribe the right and the wrong of our dealings with one another.

However, an illustration from American domestic history may prove

more convincing. During the time from the end of the Civil War down to about 1932, it was the capitalist class that held power and prestige in this country. Its political instrument was the Republican Party, and, too often, as our scholars have shown, its religious sanction came from the Christian Church. Not only did this class place its representatives in the White House and in Congress and appoint its men to the law courts, but it exercised control over the moral standards of the people, making the traditional "economic virtues" the criterion of all human righteousness. The coming of the New Deal signalized a social revolution in which another class—chiefly organized labor—came to power. The old "economic virtues" then fell into disrepute, the Supreme Court reversed its decisions, the "forgotten man" became the hero of the day while the banker and the financier skulked around dark corners, and even Mr. Frank Buchman began to extend his ministrations to the new élite of organized labor.

Thus, it would seem, might does, in fact, make right. All else is an idle dream for saints and suckers!

## II

An adequate reply to this claim of an alleged historical realism would call for some rather careful analysis. But there are three observations that can be made which indicate the essential falsity of the claim on strictly strictly empirical grounds. One observation is an insight from our religious tradition: The righteous who suffer are not so righteous as they think they are.

It is a trait almost unique to the history of the Hebrews that, when the nation fell on evil times, the great prophets, for the most part, refused to commiserate with the people on their sufferings, but reminded them of their own guiltiness before God, and of how they deserved the punishments that came to them. It might be recognized that there were solitary individuals like Job who suffered undeserved calamities, but the nation as a whole was held to deserve such chastisements as might fall to its lot. In other words, the persons of profoundest religious insight denied that it was a righteous nation which suffered, and even marveled that God could be so slow to anger and so quick to heal.

The self-righteousness of the Hebrew people is just one instance of the universal tendency of all nations to ascribe to themselves a degree of rectitude which could not be admitted by an impartial tribunal. This truth was brought home to me forcibly in connection with the sufferings of the

Chinese people in this war. It happens that China is my native land. For several years I had been horror stricken by accounts that came to me at first hand of the cruelty and brutality of the Japanese conquerors. Indeed, I could not understand why a just God should so permit the righteous to suffer and the wicked to prosper. It was, then, a startling revelation of moral truth to me when my father returned to this country on the first exchange of prisoners on the "Gripsholm," and reported the judgment of a Chinese Christian on his own people. In the opinion of this Christian—a good Chinese patriot—his people had not been righteous, and they deserved this suffering. China had been too long sunk in a slough of spiritual despond in which petty graft, political corruption, egotistic self-seeking, and purely materialistic ambitions had gradually sapped her physical and moral vitality. The corruption of the old China might not be the cause of her present suffering; but her present suffering was a just judgment on that corruption.

The humility of the Chinese Christian might serve as an example to some of the smug citizens of this land. For it seems that there are still Americans who are wondering why we, the righteous, should be suffering, in this war, for the stupidities and tyrannies of other people. "What did *we* ever do to deserve such a lot?" they exclaim. That, indeed, is precisely the point—that we did nothing. There are sins of omission as well as sins of commission. In the medieval hierarchy of vices, not the least vice is the sin of Sloth—or Complacency—and its addicts have their appropriate place in hell. Moreover, it is true that the Slothfulness of the American people has been, in almost every respect, like that of the Chinese people—the same ideal of acquisitiveness, the same graft and corruption, the identical egotistic self-seeking, the same indifference to the high imperatives of patriotism and of religion.

The plain fact is that the orthodox Nazi and Japanese view of the decadence of the Anglo-American democracies contained an unpleasant amount of truth. That the Chinese people and the Anglo-American people have been able to come out of this decadence, and to recover some measure of their former spiritual vitality, is, in part, their great good fortune, and, in part due to the very suffering against which they declaim. Certainly, at the moment that the war actually broke upon any one of these peoples, it cannot be asserted that that nation was then a model of democratic, or of Christian righteousness. After all, a robust barbarian may be preferable in God's sight to a decayed gentleman or a degenerate Christian.



Why do the righteous suffer? Well, the righteous are not always so righteous as they think they are.

### III

A second observation is a blend of insights from the Greek philosopher and the Hebrew prophet. It says: Might ceases to be might unless it is accompanied by Wisdom and by Right.

In the celebrated discussion in the *Republic*, Socrates' reply to Thrasymachus is an adequate one. Unfortunately it is obscured for many readers by being expressed in rational, dialectical terms, instead of in the pragmatic terms to which it obviously lends itself. The gist of the matter is that justice can't always be the interest of the stronger, because, when the stronger lacks the wisdom to discern his own interest, he will proclaim as justice what is really contrary to his interest. In other words, the definition is contradictory; the pursuit of might alone is self-defeating.

Two striking instances come to mind of how might destroys itself when it is not accompanied by wisdom. One thinks both of Napoleon Bonaparte and of Adolf Hitler. Each had some wisdom, some true insight, in his possession at the start of his career. But in the inevitable psychological evolution of such a career, the time came when it was believed that might alone availed for everything, and when wisdom gradually slipped away. Perhaps the attack on Russia was a common error for both men. In this instance, each one had lost the ability to discern even his own interest aright. And if recent news reports are correct, then Hitler erred not only generically in attacking Russia, but erred specifically in the assault on Stalingrad, in refusing to pay heed to the advice of his generals, and in believing that he could hold on to his objective by some imaginary brute power regardless of the impossible odds against him. One wonders also why Hitler took the initiative in declaring war on the United States after the catastrophe at Pearl Harbor. What if he had made an agreement with Japan? Would it not have been in accord with his own *realpolitik* to break that agreement if that would be to his advantage? Was not this an opportune moment to see all the energies of the American people diverted to a struggle with Japan, while Hitler had a free hand with the European continent, and, perhaps, watched with contemptuous amusement the efforts of our President to find some pretext for continuing our aid to England?

But wisdom, even in the sense of selfish prudence, soon departs from those who glorify might and become intoxicated with their own power.



Righteousness is an equally important ingredient in the mixture. Certainly it is part of the explanation why the Jewish people survive today while the many kingdoms that have conquered them have already passed into oblivion. And righteousness is part of the clue to the power of the Roman Empire, as unrighteousness is a clue to the decline of that power. Doubtless Rome did conquer at first through superior might. But Rome gave to the world many good things, the memory of which we yet cherish. Rome gave law and order; she built roads and established communications; she made possible a profitable commerce in ideas and in commodities throughout her empire; and she maintained a peace which, for its duration and efficiency, has scarcely been matched by any modern period in European history. If, eventually, Roman power declined, then it did so, I venture to believe, not because her economy automatically disintegrated, not because her communications fell of themselves into disrepair, not because the barbarians were suddenly of a stouter valor than had been vanquished by the first legions, but because, being now drunk with prosperity and with power, Rome cared no longer to maintain the benefits she had given to her world, but came to care only for the perquisites and the luxuries of her position. When the Roman passion for righteousness—for law and order and equity and self-discipline—disappeared, then Roman might disappeared.

The same principle suggests some interesting reflections on the British empire. For some decades now it has been a favorite pastime of political realists to predict the imminent dissolution of this empire. They see, quite rightly, that financial power is passing from England to the United States, and so remark one material reason the less for the colonies and dominions to hold to the mother country. They note, moreover, the looseness of the political ties that hold together the British commonwealth of nations, and eagerly await the impact of some catastrophe that shall shatter the whole structure into bits. What they do not see is that the very strength of the British system lies in the fact that it is a commonwealth and not an empire, and that the moral bonds that hold together its peoples are stouter than any constraints of political or of economic interest.

Also, if the British Empire has not been altogether righteous, it can still be argued that it has been more righteous than other competing empires in the modern world. To be sure, India and Ireland are not such commendable items in the record. But neither are they such black spots as is commonly supposed. The people of India are free, at any rate, to agitate and to organize for independence. Under no other colonial ad-

ministration—save, perhaps, an American one—would they have that much liberty. And certainly England has shown extraordinary forbearance in refraining from occupying the neighboring island of Ireland during this second World War—thus permitting a German diplomatic force and a corps of German spies to operate right next door to her. Russia did not show so much forbearance with reference to Finland and to the Baltic States. If there are shrewd reasons of state why England has so contained herself, the fact remains that there are more wisdom and more righteousness mixed in with her power than most other empires can boast.

In any case, the principle is clear: if the British Empire continues, then it will be because, along with its might, there will be sufficient wisdom and right to make it endure. There is matter here for reflection by the four great United Nations as they consider the prospect before them at the conclusion of this war. At this moment, we may believe, there is a happy coincidence of might with right on the side of the enemies of fascism. But whether or not we are to retain our might is a question of how wise we shall continue to be in discerning the right ends for which alone might may be used.

For it is not true, in fact, that might makes right. Might does not make even might. Might ceases to be might unless it is accompanied by wisdom and by right.

#### IV

The third observation is a complex one. It has to do with the nature and implications of the moral law as it operates in history. There is not space here to treat of such a matter adequately, but one may indicate a few features that are especially relevant to this inquiry.

For one thing, freedom and choice seem to be empirical realities in life. This means that it is possible for man to flout the moral law—and to take the consequences. It also means that you can start anything you like. The only question is, can you finish it? An Al Capone and an Adolf Hitler can start something. But can they finish it? The answer to the question of what you can start and what you can finish depends upon the relativity of all moral achievements in history. An Al Capone or an Adolf Hitler can start his racket in a corruptly acquisitive society, which actually nurtures the racket, and in which the racketeer has the advantage over other people that vitality has over decadence. Whether or not the racket is to continue depends upon the level of moral energy and insight to which

the rest of society may rise during the practice of the racket. If, indeed, the racket should flourish and continue to exercise its sway, then we must conclude that, up to just that point, it represents the higher level of attainment. Its might is right in the sense in which right obtains on the lowest level of competition under the moral law: the right of what is dynamic and alive over against what is dying or dead.

In the second place, the reality of freedom entails the reality of evil. Let those who can, figure out a better world in which we might have the first without the second. To the minds of most of us it is inconceivable that the one should obtain without the other, and to the observation of most of us they do in fact exist together in our world. There is, then, some undeserved suffering of the righteous on this earth, which is unrequited, either carnally or spiritually, in this life; although there is not so much of this suffering as self-righteous man would like to believe. But there is real evil. The judgment on an Ahab and a Jezebel and a Jehu may have its fulfillment in human history; but the death and the despoiling of an innocent Naboth has no recompense here. It is evil in man's sight. It is evil in God's sight. It is irreducibly, unequivocally, and ultimately evil. And no sonorous theodicy should be permitted to cover its iniquity with a gloss of smug phrases and of complacent rationalizations. This evil, alas, is, in part, the charter of our human freedom, as it is also the challenge to our moral endeavor.

Yet even when these qualifications are granted, it seems clear that the moral law, whatever it may be, is not the law that might makes right; it is a law which respects might, but which also judges its use in terms of wisdom and of right. Lord Acton, the English historian, was making an accurate empirical generalization when he remarked: "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely!" One thinks, for a moment, of the superb arrogance of a capitalist class in this country when one of its spokesmen could say: "The public be damned! I got the power, hain't I?" And one thinks, at the same time, of the equal arrogance of a great contemporary leader of American labor, into whose mouth might fittingly be placed the very same words: "The public be damned! I got the power, hain't I?" The second must learn as well as the first that it is more than brute power which regulates the course of events in human history. And as for supreme might, there is only One to whom belong, world without end, all the Kingdom, and the Glory, and the Power.

# Christianity and Law

SAMUEL E. STUMPF

THE foundation for law has always been the result of a particular interpretation of the nature and destiny of man. There are opposing systems of law today in various countries, and this is so because underlying these systems are opposing conceptions of the nature and destiny of man. Since it gives a distinctive and the ultimate interpretation of man, Christianity must inevitably affect the nature of law in our society.

Historically, there are three discernible ends toward which law has tended. The first was to keep peace in society. Actually, this meant merely keeping people secure in their particular status in society and preventing friction among people. This is essentially the concept Plato had in his *Republic*: Men were to be classified, and every one assigned to the class for which he was best fitted. But when the assignment and the classification had been made, the law was to keep him there. This idea was incorporated into Greek and Roman law, and was later applied to legal formulations in the Middle Ages.

Then came the conception that law should make possible the maximum of individual free self-assertion. This development can easily be followed: First, law was merely to keep the peace; this meant that the people had to be kept in a particular stratification if peace was to be maintained. But as time went on, it was observed that to keep people in a particular status could be very unjust. Even though people were not equal in every sense, they must be allowed the expression of their own wills so far as possible. Hence, law did not exist to maintain the social *status quo* with all its arbitrary restraints on the will and the use of individual powers; it existed, rather, to maintain natural equality which was often threatened by the traditional restrictions on individual activity. This idea was represented in different ways by the leading thinkers of that era: Kant rationalized the law in these terms as a system of principles or rules, to be applied to human action, whereby the free will of the actor may co-exist with the free will of everyone else. Hegel rationalized the law this way as a system of principles wherein and whereby the idea of human liberty was realizing itself in human experience. Spencer rationalized it as a body of rules formulating the government of the living by the dead whereby men sought to promote the

liberty of each, limited only by the like liberty for all. For all these men the end of law was to secure the greatest general individual self-assertion.

At the end of the last and at the beginning of the present century a new conception of the end of law emerged. Jurists began to think in terms of human wants and desires instead of human wills; they began to think of the end of law, not as a maximum of self-assertion, but as a maximum of satisfaction of wants.<sup>1</sup>

The antithetical nature of the above three ends of law becomes most apparent when the synthesis of Christianity and law is considered. To be sure, there is room for all these legal ends—social tranquillity, maximum expression of individual wills, and maximum satisfaction of wants—in the Christian view of the end of law. But the significant question the Christian asks is not what is the end of law, but *what is the purpose and end of man?* When this is answered, the question of the end of law is clarified.

# I

## (THESIS)

Specifically, the distinctiveness of the Christian faith lies in the fact that it is, using Professor Ferré's terminology, ". . . a God-given, God-centered freedom and faithfulness in fellowship based on the kind of love first fully revealed and made effective as light and life in Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> Essentially, this love (*agape*), is creative and productive of fellowship since it knows no racial barriers and is concerned with all of mankind. It affirms that because man is created in love and for love, his specific responsibility in life is to live in a state of fellowship. This love, centered in God, is the basis and the aim of man's responsibility. *Agape* is therefore not only the basis for the explanation of man's origin, existence and future, but it is also the ultimate standard to be used in establishing the norms according to which man ought to act in society.

Law is the means by which the relations between men have always been regulated. And it is at this point that the Christian faith must have a formative influence upon the law, for when the relations between men are regulated, the regulations are unavoidably based upon some concept of what the nature of these relations should be. At this point, Christianity and law become aspects of the same problem, since they both must interpret

<sup>1</sup> Pound, Dean Roscoe. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Law*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922. pp. 72-99.

<sup>2</sup> Ferré, Nels F. S. *The Christian Faith*. New York: Harpers, 1942. p. 31.



the nature and destiny of man. Consequently, the purpose of law cannot be different from that of Christianity in the long run. Christianity sets up the *end* which man must try to attain; law, in its broadest sense, ought to make possible in society the conditions under which freedom and faithfulness in fellowship can become a reality.

## II

### (ANTITHESIS)

Although Christianity has influenced the formation of law in particular ways, *e. g.*, by stressing the idea of the universality of law, by emphasizing the idea of human rights, and by insisting on a valuational approach to the matter of conduct as a basis of determining what is right and wrong, still the *ends* which men have tried to accomplish through law, historically, have been antithetical to the distinctively Christian end of man. Insofar as law regulates the relations between men, and insofar as these regulations cause relations which are unchristian between men, then to that extent man cannot attain the true Christian *end*.

For instance, if peace is to be maintained through law in society, certain conditions must be met—that is, there must be a basic motif of ethics which will insure this, and there must be set up the true valuation of the individual which alone can insure peace. Thus the legal system must therefore provide these two factors: it must view man as a dignified rational creature who is called upon to love his fellow man under God; and it must make possible the conditions under which man can have that particular type of equality which would enable him to love his fellow man. For the Christian, then, one end of law would be to keep the peace in society—not merely because there ought to be a state of peace, but because man as a being related to God is called upon to love all men, and out of this emerges social peace. This is not so much the end of law as it is the end of man; yet the end of law should make possible the realization of the end of man.

This raises a crucial difference between the Christian and the positivist, for the latter would regard law as an end in itself apart from the purposive end of the individual. Thus, Durkheim speaks of law as being either repressive or restitutive, meaning that the function and the end of law is either to punish defections from statutes, or to reinstate a person to his original status in society and in the structure of the division of labor from which he was dislocated by the act of another. Hence, law, or a fixed order of human relations, becomes its own end. This view of law is inadequate, for it disregards the true nature and destiny of man.



Just as social tranquillity can be an incidental end of law from the Christian point of view, the maximum of expression of the human will can also be considered as such. But here again, the distinctive approach of Christianity sets this problem of self-expression in its true perspective. The expression of the will is not synonymous with irresponsible freedom. Even though Kant said as much when he pointed out that the freedom of the actor must be co-existent with the freedom of everyone else, yet he submitted nothing in the way of an objective for freedom, besides the categorical imperative. In other words, whereas he recognized that freedom had specific limits, he did not go the next step to show that, unless freedom had an objective norm, the expression of the will could result in the denial of freedom for someone else. For example, he rationalized the doctrine of property on the basis that wills of individuals are reconciled when individuals' possession of property is secured by law. Thus, there is the freedom for all to own property. But actually this amounts to no more than a rationalization of the ownership of those who already possess property, and it is notably lacking in any idea of creation—that is, Kant was not thinking how those who "had not" might claim a greater share in what they produced, but how those who "had" might claim to hold what they had.

Thus, it is clear that freedom must be circumscribed by an objective, an end, toward which all free action must tend. The basis for freedom must be more than the desire and intent to possess things with the deliberate intent to exclude others from interest in the object. This is, of course, a principle whose ramifications must be worked out systematically and completely. Yet this much is obvious, that freedom has lost its meaning when its application can in subtle ways abort the freedom of others and result in deep cleavages in society. Christianity presupposes a freedom in society, but this freedom must be in fellowship based upon a motif that causes cohesion rather than division. Hence, the objective of the free will must of necessity be *agape*. And the end of law must be more than securing freedom for groups and nations. Freedom must go beyond the point of an irresponsible and selfish exercise to a responsible act directed at unity and fellowship.

Christianity makes a sharp distinction between human wants and human needs. It is a valid end for law to insure the maximum of human *wants*; but, when a legal system is so constructed that it deliberately sets up the satisfaction of wants as the end of human existence, then it is sure to deny man his basic *needs*.

In countries where the end of man has been interpreted as merely the

satisfaction of his wants (which are thought of mainly in material terms), the legal structure has been affected accordingly. Thus, in Russia, where for the past few decades the religious conception of man has been discarded, law has been reduced to a matter of administrative pronouncements—that is, so long as the legislative policy is such that it helps to satisfy the wants of the majority, no regard is given to the fact that these pronouncements represent only the will of a governing few. In a system such as that, there is no doubt but that more material things can be produced and more things built for the purpose of the satisfaction of human wants. But it is also a fact that under such a system of law it is not possible to realize human needs, as these lie in the spiritual realm and are attained through living freely in fellowship. Any system of law which tends merely to secure the satisfaction of wants ultimately produces an arbitrary government since there is no necessary relation between the securing of the satisfaction of wants on the one hand and the securing of individual rights on the other. And where the individual cannot be free to live in fellowship based upon the kind of love Christ revealed, then he is unable to realize the end for which he was created, and the legal system which stands in his way is therefore to be condemned as grossly defective. Of course the entire blame for the perversity of our contemporary age cannot be placed upon legal systems alone. However, just as individuals must be redeemed, so must legal systems and conceptions also be redeemed.

*(Conclusion)*

A thoroughgoing analysis, therefore, of the specific points at which the distinctive motif of Christianity must inevitably be brought to bear upon legal conceptions is an urgent matter for today, especially when far-reaching decisions must be made both in national and international affairs. The nature and destiny of man from the Christian point of view must inevitably affect all legal doctrines which divide people against each other, whether that doctrine be one of national sovereignty on the collective scale, or a doctrine of contract on the more individual scale where the relations between men occur. For the new era into which the world is now moving, the need for a clear-cut pronouncement of the Christian interpretation of the nature and destiny of man is imperative if we are to have a formative influence upon the development of the legal system which is to govern our relations with our fellow men.

# A Perennial Pattern of Prejudice

BERNARD HELLER

**T**HE presence of the Book of Esther in Holy Writ is baffling. Opinion is divided among biblical scholars as to whether this book depicts fact or fiction. It is unlikely that the narrative was deemed historical even by ancient chroniclers. The book, furthermore, does not affirm any religious precept. It is definitely secular in tone and spirit. The name of God is not mentioned even once in the entire book. It is ironical that the Book of Maccabees should have been left out of the Canon and the Book of Esther should have been included. Few are the books in the Old Testament which can claim to play as important a role in the Jewish calendar as does the Book of Esther. What is the reason for the phenomenon?

The answer is to be found, I believe, in the timeless truths which the story reveals.

## I

I shall but touch on the high points of the tale in order to recall to the reader the drama which it unfolds. Let the reader imagine that before him there stands a magic apparatus that can conjure up voices and scenes not only of the living present, but also of the dead past.

The television instrument projects upon the screen a picture of King Ahasuerus, the ruler of the vast empire of Persia, an empire which includes no less than 127 provinces. We see him, sotted with drink at a royal banquet which he gives to his fawning cohorts. The scene reveals to us not only his wealth, but also his weaknesses. He is a vain, vacillating, flabby-minded tyrant. Prejudice and not principle, caprice and not conviction sway him. He is the puppet of scheming counselors to whom he has happened to take a fancy for the moment. They dominate him and he unwittingly dances to their tune. Upon the advice of his courtiers he even deposes his consort, the queen, because she deemed it undignified and immodest to obey his command and display her beauty before his drunken guests.

We turn the dial and years roll by and scenes change. New faces greet our eyes. Fair and gentle Esther occupies the place of the former queen, while her uncle, the Jew, his kinship unknown to the world, sits

at the gate of the king. Esther keeps in touch with him but does not disclose to her spouse her religious or national identity. For so Mordecai commanded her.<sup>1</sup>

We behold also the hard and cruel face of a new royal adviser, a man obsessed with an insatiable, as well as unscrupulous, desire for glory and power. Haman is his name. The king is but putty in the palm of his hand. All knees bend before him except those of the Jew, Mordecai, who sits at the gates of the king. Haman boils with rage and indignation. In his vindictiveness he plots to exterminate not only Mordecai, but his entire people, who are domiciled in the empire.

We see Haman holding an audience with the unwitting king. He does not reveal to the king the basic cause of his bloody scheme, namely, his personal grudge against Mordecai. He puts his motives on the high plane of patriotism. He is directed to the course by his intense devotion to the king and his loyalty to the empire and its laws and life.

"There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them."<sup>2</sup>

The simple and unsuspecting king sanctions his request, and a whole people is doomed to utter annihilation on a certain day.

Stricken with fear, Mordecai implores Esther to intervene. He now exhorts her to reveal her Jewish antecedents.

"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art to come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"<sup>3</sup>

She consents, and replies:

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish."<sup>4</sup>

Matching the astuteness of Haman, Esther succeeds in arousing the

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 11:20.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 3:8.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter 4:13-14.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 4:16.

jealousy and suspicions of Ahasuerus against Haman, who makes his power come to an end and his plans utterly to fail.<sup>5</sup> Instead of Mordecai hanging on the gallows which Haman erected, we behold in that place the dangling bodies of Haman and his sons. Mordecai's place is now no more at the gate, but a member of the court of the king.

"And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king, in royal apparel of blue and white; and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple, and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad."<sup>6</sup>

The behavior of Mordecai, Esther and the Jewish population, after the downfall of Haman is noteworthy. Mordecai and Esther, we read, were given royal permission to proceed as they saw fit.<sup>7</sup> They did not permit vindictiveness to drive them into an orgy of killings. The orders that were dispatched granted the Jews the right to meet their assailants and slay them only in self-defense,<sup>8</sup> and though the decree sanctioned the seizure of what must have been illegitimately-acquired wealth of their intended murderers, the Jews nevertheless scrupulously avoided indulging in any plunder.<sup>9</sup>

The main story comes to an end, but there is an epilogue, and in that epilogue there looms the form of a woman, garbed in a flowing white robe with scales, the symbol of judgment, in one hand, and a book, the symbol of wisdom and experience, in the other. She is the figure of history. She praises the work and the deeds of Mordecai in the following words:

"Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed."<sup>10</sup>

## II

The story, as the reader has noticed, has a locale and temporal setting. The scene is the Orient; the time about 300 B. C. E., the *dramatis personae* Mordecai and Haman, who symbolize the dazzled and distracted Jew and the brutal and bigoted pagan. The theme of the drama is anti-Jewish prejudice. Local and temporal as is the setting, nevertheless the author in this story or chronicle reveals a philosophic comprehension of, and a psy-

<sup>5</sup> For the details of her procedure the reader is referred to the Book of Esther.

<sup>6</sup> Chapter 8:15.

<sup>7</sup> Chapter 8:8.

<sup>8</sup> Chapter 8:11.

<sup>9</sup> ("On the prey they laid not their hands" is the recurrent phrase of the chronicler of the events—or author of the story. 9:15-16.)

<sup>10</sup> Chapter 10:3.

chological insight into, the causes of group antagonism which make its description and diagnosis of the malady eternally valid and true, even in our own day.

These are some of the salient facts which are brought out in this story. First group hatred and prejudice are not the result of spontaneous outburst on the part of a people, but are rather the product of propaganda of an individual or a group of individuals. Until Haman makes his appearance, all indications point to the existence of a peaceful relations between the Jews and the Persians. The Jew was permitted to live in any one of the 127 provinces of the empire. Mordecai, we are informed, sat at the gates of the king. This phrase, "sitting at the gates of the king," means that he occupied the position of judge in the High Court of Persia.<sup>11</sup> A Jewess even succeeded in becoming a queen unto the king. Haman appears and because of a personal injury, which one Jew had justly or unjustly occasioned him, he developed a dislike and hatred for all Jews. His cruel heart and intriguing mind stopped at nothing short of their utter destruction.

Are not many of us in our attitude toward this denomination or that racial group guilty of the same crime? We have an unpleasant experience with an individual of that race or religion, and we allow our passions and prejudices to infect our souls to such an extent that we feel embittered against the entire faith and nationality of that person, forgetting that among the members of that faith or people there are superbly beautiful and noble souls. The psychologist calls such expansive hatred stereotyped reactions. Some Italians there are who have murderous instincts, and all Italians are stereotyped as murderers. Some Jews there are who are sharp in their business practices, therefore all Jews are branded as cheats and crooks. Some Scotchmen there are who are parsimonious and frugal, therefore all Scotchmen are miserly. Such generalizations or reactions not only flout all statistical facts which definitely prove that human nature is the same no matter what flag or faith it adopts; sometimes these statistics even prove the contrary of the allegation to be true. Prejudice, however, is not a respecter of facts or statistics.

Secondly, propaganda against a particular race or creed is not disinterested preoccupation. Its sponsors engender suspicion against minority peoples or faiths partly in the hope of gain or profit derived from a program of hate.

Mordecai was not, as is supposed, an insignificant Jew who refused

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<sup>11</sup> (See Genesis 19:1 and 19:9.)



to bend his knee to the well-nigh omnipotent minister, Haman. Mordecai was, as is contended, a judge in the court of the king. Haman beheld in him a rival and a competitor. He felt his position and power insecure so long as Mordecai was free to follow his pursuits and profession. This consciousness of insecurity and probably also incapacity to compete fairly with his opponent, stirred Haman to intrigue against Mordecai and his people. We are told that Haman paid into the royal treasury ten thousand pieces of gold for the king's sanction of his bloody scheme. We may rest assured that the honor and the material gain which he had hoped to acquire from Mordecai's deposition would have outweighed the payment of that huge sum.

When one delves into the causes which induce an individual or a group of individuals to incite the masses against a certain people or sect, he will rarely find that their motives are altruistic or unselfish. Why did the Russian Czar and his ilk, whenever demands were made by the people for a greater share in government, resort to calling the attention of the masses to a so-called Jewish menace and danger? It was a trick to divert their attention from governmental corruption. Why was prejudice against the Japanese strong in the West and not in the East? Why do disabilities against the Negroes prevail in the South and not in the North? Because in these districts Japanese and Negroes are competitors who challenge the economic or social supremacy of the whites. A misappropriation of funds on the part of the Grand Mufti is uncovered and he lets loose a smoke-screen of lies and libels that the Jews are planning to seize the Mosque of Omar. The mob becomes infuriated and forgets all about the funds.

Thirdly, in the story we are told how Haman gilded his vicious and selfish motives with plausible arguments. He sought to destroy the Jews, he contended, not because Mordecai, his rival, was a member of that ethnic group. He rationalized his hatred and placed it on a high pedestal of patriotism.

Students of psychology are aware of the fact that when a man harbors a strong desire for or against a certain thing which his higher or better self tells him is wrong, he will invariably succeed in supporting his like or dislike with some form of logic or idealism. The saying that even the devil glibly quotes Scripture is born of this rationalizing tendency.

In more recent centuries, Jews have been opposed on economic grounds. Like Haman, their persecutors cried, "It is not for the king's profit or welfare that they be suffered." The economic rationalization of these anti-

Semites would appear ludicrous were they not so tragic in their results. For example, they cry: Jews are radicals and bolshevists, and lay the blame for the Russian revolution at their doors. In the very same breath, however, Jews are termed "international bankers and financiers" and are said to control the money-marts of the world. They wittingly or unwittingly do not see that these charges are mutually contradictory. For Jews are either bolshevists or capitalists. They cannot be both.<sup>12</sup> Whenever there is a catastrophe or an outbreak of war, the disaster is attributed to one of these two *supposed* aptitudes of the Jew. If any anti-Semite would take the trouble to examine facts or read statistics he would easily convince himself of the falsity of either charge. For example, the number of Jews in the communist party of Russia or of any other country was a fraction of what the population entitled them to have. The bolshevistic upheaval in Russia has harmed the Jew as much as any other group. Being mostly of the middle class, millions of Jews were deprived of an occupation as well as property.

As for the other charge, I have no quarrel with the unthinking masses who assume that Jews are fabulously wealthy. The mob forms its opinions on the basis of external appearance. Its members come into a city and they notice signs over stores owned by Goldberg, Cohen or Levy and they conclude that Jews have a monopoly of the town's businesses and that unlimited wealth is theirs. They do not see the tremendous wealth of the men whose occupations do not demand that they display their names or wares. One such man may have interest in a mine whose value exceeds all the coats, dresses and suspenders of all the Jews in the city. His securities are not on view before the public.

My quarrel is with those pseudo-scientific anti-Semites who go to the extent of writing books and essays in which they accuse the Jew of owning and dominating the financial institutions of the world. In propounding this charge they subject to the gutter of malice not only their consciences, but the very canons of truth.

The supposition that the Jews play a prominent role in the realms of finance, industry and the press, etc., was current even before Nazi propaganda pictured their activity as a menace to the State. Malicious fabrications, innocent psychologic aberrations, as well as the Jewish weakness in seeking to bolster their sense of security by boasting of their contributions to the land in which they live and for which they have acquired a deep love—are responsible for the prevalence of such notions. When Hitler

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<sup>12</sup> Different appeals, of course, are made to different groups.

and his ilk succeeded in infecting the minds of the multitudes in America with the view that the Jews are aliens—and avid for power, wealth and influence, *Fortune* magazine undertook to make a study of the role of the Jew in the fields listed by the anti-Semites. The results of the investigation was contained in an issue (February, 1936) of that magazine. Since then its findings have been published in book form under the title, *Jews in America*. The study presented an array of evidence which proved the charges that the Jews controlled American finance, industry and public opinion to be pure myths. Even in the amusement field their influence was shown to be limited. The garment—or ready-to-wear industry—is an exception to the rule. Whether because of the matchless social and cultural achievements of the unions in this industry, as well as the success of the employers in giving to the consumer at a reasonable price a garment whose style and make are craved by people of modest income all over the world, the anti-Semites seem to have avoided citing this industry as an example of Jewish economic domination.

The facts disclosed by *Fortune* magazine are no revelations. They were ascertainable by anyone who was willing to consult studies and researches in this subject. In a book entitled *Juedische Weltfinanz*, Dr. Richard Lewinsohn had shown that only one per cent of the largest incomes may be attributed to Jews. "An investigation regarding international capitalists and their influence," wrote Doctor Lewinsohn, "shows that this is not at all a Jewish specialty. On the contrary, the greatest and most important international trusts and bank firms are ruled almost exclusively by non-Jews. This shatters the charge that the Jews are controlling international finance."

Citing the list of the forty-four wealthiest men (those possessing twenty to one hundred and twenty millions of dollars), which was compiled by the Englishman, James Burnley, the writer further observes: "This list shows how absurd is the statement made recently in an anti-Semitic pamphlet, without any reference to authoritative sources, giving the wealth of the Krupp family before the war at two hundred and fifty million marks and that of the Rothschild family at forty thousand million marks. Even at the very peak of their fortune, the wealth of all the Rothschilds, including the near and distant relatives, did not reach one twentieth of the sum which a financial ignoramus, dazed by the conceptions of the inflation period has given in the interest of the *voeklische* propagandists."

"The fallacy of the charge of Jewish financial world domination is also proven by statistics compiled by Dr. Hoffman Campe and published in the *Vossische*

*Zeitung*. International capital is in Aryan hands, and only a small and diminishing proportion is in Jewish hands," Doctor Campe writes. "This applies not only in the case of industrial capital, which is almost entirely in the hands of non-Jews, but also in the case of bank capital, where the Jewish influence is much less than is popularly supposed. Among the six people with the largest incomes in America there is not a single Jew. Among the twelve men with the largest incomes in the United States there is only one Jew, Otto Kahn, who has ninth place on the list. Among the twelve wealthiest men in the world there is not a single Jew."

Prejudice mostly, however, comes concealed in another form of rationalization. It links itself with the theory of the supposed superiority of race, culture, or nation. The men who resort to that type of rationalization are obsessed with the belief that their race represents the cream of humanity and its culture or way of life the very apex of perfection. Theirs is the best stock and their attitude and actions the paragon of civilization. All other peoples and their cultures and customs are branded as inferior. If one of the despised people happens to reside within the national border and continues to maintain a loyalty to its ancestral traditions and ways, the group with the obsessions of superiority tends to become alarmed. It considers "others" as aliens and "their" modes of life as corrosive influences to the nationalism which it has exalted. To be a good citizen, it seems that it is not enough for one passionately to love one's domicile and contribute the product of his brain and brawn to that country's physical and spiritual development. One must think, dress and play as the dominant group does. Through such suppression the dominant group strives to create a homogeneous nationalism which it affirms is ideal and supreme. Against those who dissent from its professions they bring up the old cry of Haman:

"There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of the kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them."

This demand for assimilation on the part of the believers in racial and cultured uniformity, this theory of the "melting pot" is doomed to failure. For men are endowed with different temperaments. They are in possession of diverse traditions and tenets. They are the bearers of historical experiences which are unique. To ask them to give these up is tantamount to a demand that they give up something which is inextricably part and parcel of their very being. Even if they were able to part with these ingrained habits and attitudes, they could not satisfy the advocates

of cultural and racial homogeneity. For they would not rest until all differences, even of physiognomy and color of hair should disappear.

A careful study of the Book of Esther discloses that Mordecai and Esther are names derived from pagan deities. The Jews of Persia at first may be said to have sought peace through a policy of surrender. Mordecai commanded Esther to conceal her Jewish identity. The name of Jehovah is not mentioned even once in the entire story. Yet this did not prevent Haman's malicious efforts. His very appearance made the Jews realize their error and change their ways.

Mordecai's command to Esther now is:

"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall their enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art to come to the kingdom for such a time as this."<sup>13</sup>

Esther's reply now is:

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go unto the king; which is not according to the law, and if I perish, I perish."<sup>14</sup>

Mordecai now does not stand aloof from his people, but becomes thoroughly absorbed with their physical and spiritual welfare.

"For Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed."<sup>15</sup>

Even were such an assimilation possible it would, despite the contentions of the racial and cultural purists, be undesirable. It would spell not the spiritual enrichment but the impoverishment of that state and nation. Standardization and drab uniformity would take the place of the prevailing colorful cultural and ethnic diversity. America would become reduced to a magnified Gopher Prairie and its citizens to a species of insipid Babbits. One is prone, for example, to ask the question, Is the cultural status of the ordinary boy born in America of Jewish immigrant family really higher than that of his parents? The father has the sagacious wit of the Talmud; the son replies in the cheap repartee of musical comedy. The father calls

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 4:13-14.

<sup>14</sup> Chapter 4:15-16.

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 10:3.



to memory the hundreds of proverbs from Bible and Talmud; the son knows the baseball batting averages to a "T." The father knows Hebrew; the son knows slang. The father has been moved by the profound ideals of Jewish life, by the pathos and romance of Jewish history; the son is a devoted go-getter.

Foreign individuals or groups who settle in America must, to some extent, adapt themselves to the new environment and culture. They ought to strive to know the language of the land. This does not mean that they must deprecate the knowledge or use of other languages. They ought to acquaint themselves with the epic story and struggles of the Republic. This does not, however, mean that they must remain ignorant of the history of nations from which they or their ancestors have sprung. The exploits and ideals of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln ought to grip their souls. This, however, need not imply that they must conceive them as commanding undivided homage and worship.

America's demands have been described beautifully by Dr. Charles W. Eliot, of Harvard University, when he said:

"You doubtless have heard a great deal of talk in this country during the last five or six years about the assimilation of races in the United States. The fact is, and it is perfectly plain, that there has been no assimilation in the United States, and more than that, it isn't deserving that there should be any assimilation or amalgamation of races in the United States. That isn't what we need; that isn't for our best advantage in this country. What we want is numerous races with various history, various gifts, with various abilities, living side by side in concord, not in discord, and each contributing its own peculiar quality to the mixed population."

### III

Before the ogre of Nazism cast its horrifying shadow over the world one was able to observe the waning of the tendency to resort to rationalizations of racial and religious bigotry. The K.K.K. sprang up overnight like the grass described by the Psalmist.<sup>18</sup> It withered, however, as quickly. Before the Hitler régime set in, men of diverse sects and stock were beginning to understand and respect each other. An occasional relapse into bigotry aroused world-wide attention and stirred multitudes to protest vehemently against the reversion. Such knowledge and better understanding was the greatest antiseptic to the spread of the disease of prejudice.

Hitler and the Nazis have not merely arrested the development of this growth in better understanding and mutual regard between Gentiles

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 92:8.



and Jews. They have definitely set the course in reverse. They planned and succeeded in deluging the world with misinformation which depicts the Jew as dangerous and his faith as despicable. The Nazi poison has infected the minds of masses of people not only of one but of both belligerents in the present war. The difference is only that with one the bacilli are active and virulent, while with the other they are *at present* more or less passive and subdued.

It would be the height of folly for men of good will to imagine the danger is past because Haman is on the other side and because his agents are now under leash and surveillance. The weathering of a crisis does not mean that the patient's recovery is assured. The continued visits of the physician, the vigilant care of a nurse are still indispensable—if good health is to ensue. After the military defeat of Hitler much education will be necessary not only in Axis lands, but also in those of the United Nations. In his latest (pray God that it be his last) address Hitler went out of his way to warn Jewry that his defeat will not spell safety to them. For he is seeing to it that the Allied prisoners who return to their homelands shall activate the dormant bacilli of anti-Semitism. Our task, therefore, is to remove all the poison we can from the minds of the afflicted and then to immunize them against all future infections.

The proposed pledge "to spread no rumor or slander against any sect; to refrain from trying to indict a whole people for the delinquency of one member; to deal with every man on the basis of his true individual worth, and to consecrate self to the ideals of human equality, fellowship and brotherhood" is admirable. It is, however, not enough that one refrain from being a purveyor of malice. He must first learn to be critical and develop an ability to detect what is a rumor and what is slander, and also the origins and objectives of whispering campaigns and heralded crusades. He must also know about other groups and be sufficiently secure so that he need not seek scapegoats for his failures.

To this end it would be wise if we developed a habit of demanding and probing proof of the allegations against peoples as well as against individuals. Are the charges based on empiric evidence? Were the data obtained by impartial and reputable scholars? Do their findings stand the test of scientific criteria? Or are the charges the product of suppositions and psychologic aberrations whose evil effects are unwitting and unplanned? Are they deliberate falsehoods and distortions which were initiated by individuals with malicious intent?

If the answers to the query should indicate that the charges fit in the latter category one does not, it seems to me, perform his full duty by merely refusing to transmit evil. He must try to extirpate it by laying the axe to the root of it. He must adopt the dictum of the Psalmists which was not merely to "depart from evil," but also to "do good."<sup>17</sup> He ought to educate himself so that he may be qualified to convince the bearer of the slander and the falsehood that he had been made the duped accomplice of an individual or group who hoped to derive gain or prestige for himself or his class from the dissemination of such accusation or malicious innuendo.

Lastly, they must realize that only evil can come to a nation which allows the breeding of suspicion and dissension between its constituent racial or religious units to go unhindered. This is true in normal times—and infinitely more so in times of crises.

In brief, the book of Esther has acquired its high place in Jewish thought and life because it exemplifies the persistent pattern of anti-Semitism. It shows it to be a movement which is invariably engendered by sinister or self-seeking individuals who, to gain their ends, will not shrink from perverting Truth and Justice, or from exploiting their fellow citizens or even jeopardizing the weal and security of their country. The story of Esther, it seems to me, also contains a corollary or an implicit admonition. It says to the gullible and naïve multitude upon whom the cunning and craven anti-Semites prey: "Get wise to yourself. Become inquiring and critical. Demand of the crusaders and messianists an answer to these questions: What's back of your venture, and who is behind it?"

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<sup>17</sup> Psalms 34:14.

# The Christian Heritage of Nonresistance

D. ELTON TRUEBLOOD

## I

**I**N THE present war, more than in any war known in history, the Christian opposition to war has been a significant factor. The significance of Christian opposition to war appears in the present struggle not merely in the number of men who declare themselves religious objectors, asking for 4-E classification in the draft or refusing to register for the draft, but in the total impact of the objection on public opinion and consequently on national policy. There is a great deal of religious objection to participation in war which never appears in the statistics of selective service because many whose opposition is strongest are women, or men beyond the draft age or, clergymen, automatically exempt. Anyone acquainted with contemporary Protestantism knows that there are thousands of ministers whose opposition to participation in war is quite as strong as that of the young men in the Civilian Public Service Camps.

The opposition to war on Christian grounds was an obvious deterrent to the more military party in America in the days before the Pearl Harbor attack and would have continued to be something of a deterrent, apart from a direct attack on American soil. It is hard to believe that our government's conspicuously generous treatment of ministers is wholly unrelated to this known opposition. In any case the enemies of our nation have been cognizant of the presence of religious pacifism in our midst and long counted on it as a factor favorable to themselves.

Though the Christian opposition to war is a greater factor in world affairs now than ever before, it is important to note that Christian pacifism has a long history. In all previous wars the government of the United States has had to deal with conscientious objectors and the experience of Great Britain has been similar for almost three hundred years. The chief change now appears in the degree to which objection appears in many branches of the Church, whereas formerly it was limited, for the most part, to a few separated groups, often known as the historic peace churches.

Since pacifism in the sense of refusal to share in military service is now such an important part of the Christian witness, it is highly desirable

that we learn all we can of the experience of the nonresistant groups which may serve as something of a guide to contemporary practice.

## II

Nonresistance has been a curious feature of the Christian heritage in that we have never been able wholly to reject it or wholly to accept it. Professor C. J. Cadoux put Christian scholars in his debt twenty-five years ago when he wrote *The Early Christian Attitude to War*, giving evidence of the considerable opposition to war which existed in the Christian community before the time of Constantine. The balance of the evidence is indicated by the fact that Part II of this book is concerned with "Forms of the Early Christian Disapproval of War," while Part III is entitled "Forms of the Early Christian Acceptance of War." We find in early Christian history a great deal of Christian refusal to participate in war, but we find likewise a great deal of Christian recognition of war as a necessary activity of the state. At the same time that Christians refuse to be soldiers they pray for the efficiency and success of the soldiers who are helping to keep out the barbarian invader and administer justice throughout the empire. This combination often appears slightly shocking to many at first, but there is little doubt that this combination existed.

It is important to remember, as Cadoux has shown, that the early Christian attitude toward war was not a political judgment concerning the lawfulness of war for the state, but a religious judgment concerning the lawfulness of war for the Christian man or the Christian society. This is important because it is essentially the same as the major testimony of the historic peace churches up to now, though it is in sharp contrast to some of the antiwar feeling in contemporary life. We are in a totally different situation when we reach the modern Christian objection to war which expresses itself by means of a political lobby working for disarmament or seeking to influence foreign policy.

Christian opposition to war, in the historic sense described by Cadoux, is never long absent from the Christian consciousness. It reappears spontaneously in different centuries, frequently without direct intellectual borrowing. It is not surprising, of course, in view of the words of Jesus, that this should be so. What is surprising, in the light of Jesus' apparent rejection of violence, is not that there has been so much spontaneous pacifism, but that there has not been more.

The upshot of the matter is that pacifism has not been the major

Christian position, but that the major Christian thought has not been able to neglect it. The minority opinion has been so strong and persistent that the majority opinion has been forced to take it into account. *No war can be undertaken now in Christian lands without grave misgivings.* A noble representative of the major Christian tradition was giving classic expression to this inevitable misgiving when St. Augustine said, in *The City of God*, that if anyone endures or thinks of wars "without mental pain, his is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks himself happy because he has lost all human feeling." Christian refusal to participate in war has never achieved full orthodoxy, but it has been a perennially contributory factor *in* orthodoxy.

The nonresistant tradition in modern western Christianity has two chief historical sources, one appearing in the sixteenth century and the other in the seventeenth. The former arose on the European continent in the Anabaptist Movement and the latter arose in Great Britain in the Quaker Movement. The former is represented today by the Dunkers, Mennonites and similar groups, while the latter is represented by the Society of Friends and those whom Friends have influenced in our day.

### III

Though the first of these two streams arose in the sixteenth century, particularly in Germany, the Anabaptist testimony against participation in war received its clearest expression early in the seventeenth century when certain Articles of Faith were adopted at Dortrecht in 1632 with the signature of representatives of the "United Churches" in the Low Countries and Germany. These Articles were accepted and maintained by American Mennonites upon their arrival in this country. The traditional Mennonite basis of objection to participation in war is given in two sections of this Declaration, Section XIII and Section XIV, the former being concerned with government and the latter with Defense or Revenge.

The objection to military action is based, among all groups which carry on the general tradition of the Anabaptists, on the direct words of the New Testament, with no attempt at a philosophical defense of the position. This is expressed in such a straightforward fashion that it is a bit surprising that the position has not been more widely adopted, especially among those who have revered the words of Scripture literally. The non-resistant groups of European origin display a commendable consistency in this matter, which most Fundamentalist groups have not done. Christ

forbade his disciples to swear; so they refuse to swear. Christ enjoined His disciples to wash one another's feet; so they obey Him.

The objection to war is equally direct and equally literal. "As regards revenge or defense, in which men resist their enemies with the sword, we believe and confess that the Lord Jesus Christ forbade His disciples, His followers, all revenge and defense, and commanded them, besides, not to render evil for evil, nor railing for railing, but to sheathe their swords, or, in the words of the prophet, 'to beat them into ploughshares.'" It was understood that this refusal might involve great hardship and that it might be necessary "to flee for the Lord's sake from one country to another and take patiently the spoiling of our goods." The positive aspect of this testimony was represented by the requirement that such non-resisters should pray for their enemies, "feed and refresh them when they are hungry or thirsty, and thus convince them by kindness and overcome all ignorance."

To this day these quotations represent the chief basis of what is called conscientious objection on the part of the historic peace churches with the exception of the Society of Friends.<sup>1</sup> In many local churches the weight of Mennonite or Dunker tradition, combined with the direct word of Scripture, is so great that the young men take the position of objectors almost automatically and go to prison or Civilian Public Service Camp as the elders direct.

Though the Dortrecht testimony for abstinence from war is unequivocal, it was in line with the early Christian pacifism described by Cadoux, in that the stand did not involve an effort to limit the military action of governments as governments. The testimony was specific concerning the refusal of the Christian to share in war, but it was not specific concerning the government's execution of war. "We believe and confess," says the Declaration, "that God instituted and appointed authority and a magistracy for the punishing of the evildoers and to protect the good; and also to govern the world, and preserve the good order of cities and countries; hence, we dare not despise, gainsay or resist the same, but we must acknowledge the magistracy as the minister of God, be subject and obedient thereto in all good works, especially in all things not repugnant to God's law."

In summarizing the position of the sixteenth-century pacifist tradition,

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<sup>1</sup> The Jehovah's Witnesses, being a modern organization, does not depend upon a consciously fostered tradition, but the basis of objection to participation in war is a literalism even more pronounced than that of the original Anabaptist movement.



it is true to say that it is broadly nonresistant and that its chief emphasis is the negative one of refusal to engage in war, rather than the positive one of peacemaking. In any case it has seldom been what we now know as political pacifism. It is assumed that the civil or military authorities will be other people than those who accept the validity of the Declaration. The problem of what would or should occur if a nonresistant Christian were himself in the position of political power and responsibility is never, it would appear, given anything like adequate attention. Another relevant consideration is found in the fact that all the argument is with reference to two parties rather than three. The question always is what the Christian should do if someone strikes him and not what he should do if the person struck is an innocent third party. There is no doubt that the answer, based as it is on a literal interpretation of Scripture, would be the same, but the fact remains that the problem of aggression is not faced in its most difficult form, so far as the sensitive Christian is concerned.

#### IV

The second modern tradition, that of the Society of Friends, arose with little conscious indebtedness to similar movements on the continent of Europe, though the unconscious influence was doubtless considerable. George Fox seems to have come to his pacifist position with no great intellectual or moral strain, his position seeming to him the wholly natural application of the principles by which he was trying to live. In the year 1650, when Fox was twenty-six years of age and he was near the end of one of his numerous imprisonments, he was offered a commission in the Parliamentary Army. Though the consequent release would have been convenient, Fox, without hesitation, refused and accordingly "was put into a lousy, stinking place, without any bed, amongst thirty felons" for almost six months. Fox's own account of the incident gives some indication of what the basis of his refusal was. "I told them I knew from whence all wars arose, even from the lusts, according to James's doctrine; and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars. Yet they courted me to accept their offer, and thought I did but compliment them. But I told them I was come into the covenant of peace, which was before wars and strifes were."

George Fox was not concerned merely with the literal obedience to the word of Scripture, but rather with faithfulness to a kind of life which seemed to him incompatible with war. He did not, of course, achieve this

life himself, but the possibility of it was his constant inspiration. The characteristic early Friends really believed that they had come into Paradise Regained, that they lived in a new dispensation or in a revival of a very old dispensation. They sought to embody a spirituality which made priesthood unnecessary, as it made oaths and warfare unnecessary. They were called, they believed, to make a pure witness in a manifestly impure and imperfect world.

It must not be supposed that Fox, himself, had much to say about war. War was not really a problem to him. He lived through the English Civil War almost as though it were not going on and with very little interest in its outcome. How he would have felt if he had faced a situation like our own in which the Christian must contemplate the problem of cruel oppression as well as the problem of military resistance we do not know, for Fox did not give his mind to anything of this kind. Though his basis of objection was not identical with that of the signers at Dortrecht, the problem seemed to him, as to them, essentially simple. "The pure life of love precludes war; this is war; therefore I cannot share in it," was the gist of his simple argument. So little emphasis did Fox place on this religious objection to war that he mentioned it only a few times in his famous *Journal*. References to the evils of priesthood, for example, are far more numerous than are the references to war.

The position arrived at by Fox was adopted with practical universality by the early Friends and has constituted the major Quaker tradition since that time. The testimony of Scripture, especially as found in the Sermon on the Mount, has frequently been employed as additional support, but the main emphasis continues to be that of a quality of life with which fighting is incompatible.

The chief historical development of Quaker objection has consisted in an increasing sense of the complexity of the relevant issues and more concern for the actual conduct of government. The three most distinguished followers of Fox in the seventeenth century all made contributions of this kind. These were Isaac Penington, Robert Barclay and William Penn, the first chiefly remarkable as a mystical writer, the second as a theologian and the third as a statesman.

The fact that these three men were important men in the world and not merely in the infant Society of Friends had a strong influence on the development of Quaker thought, leading it in ways markedly different from the ways of the Mennonites. What was new was the belief that a

Friend might engage in the work of a "magistrate," *i. e.*, one responsible for government. Barclay was the first governor of what we call New Jersey and Penn's experiment is celebrated. But the point to note is that Friends early recognized that such an interest involved inevitable compromises. It was on the precise nature of these compromises that some of the best thought of early Friends was concentrated.

Both Penington and Barclay accepted without reservations the insight of Fox to the effect that the Christian is called to a type of life incompatible with participation in war, but both distinguished sharply between the duty of the separated Christian and the duty of a national government which represents many who make no Christian profession whatever. It would be ridiculous, these distinguished exponents of Quakerism argued, to expect of a state, made up of a mixed population, what we rightly expect of a perfectionist religious society. Barclay, therefore, does not say it is wrong for the *state* to engage in military defense, but he does say it is wrong for those who have been called to bear witness to the pure gospel to engage in it. Barclay's logical defense is that it is pointless to say an organization *ought* to do what it *cannot* do. Obligation has no meaning apart from possibility. The crucial sentence in Barclay's *Apology* is as follows: "So the present confessors of the Christian name, who are yet in the mixture, and not in the patient suffering spirit, are not yet fitted for this form of Christianity, and therefore cannot be undefending themselves until they attain that perfection."

This doctrine is very far from intellectual simplicity and has struck different people in different ways. Some find it oversophisticated and others consider it profound wisdom. Many have been quick to note how similar this doctrine is to certain Roman Catholic doctrines. Perhaps there is a real connection, in view of the fact that Barclay's early training was received in Paris from Romanist theologians. Professor Roland Bainton, writing in this journal in the Summer Number, 1943, mentioned the present acceptance by Friends of what is sometimes called vocational pacifism and asserted that the Quakers were moving toward the monks. The assertion is inaccurate not because the two are totally dissimilar, but because it suggests that the adoption of this distinction between what is right for the state and what is right for some *in* the state is something which Friends are just now taking up. It was carefully examined two hundred and seventy years ago.

It must be understood that this distinction made by Penington and Barclay is not the same as the easy tolerance which says each must follow

his inner light and that an action is right if a man thinks it right. The contrast is not between *some* and *others*, as many critics of the Barclay position have erroneously supposed, but between the member of the separated Christian society and the *state*. The problem is not that of individual morality, but of political morality.

## V

William Penn's contribution arose out of his practical effort to found an ideal commonwealth, "an holy experiment in government." How were the principles which were suitable for a dissenting minority to be applied when those in charge of a government professed these same principles? Could there be a state with no army? What would be the responsibility of the governor to those of his colonists who did not subscribe to his doctrines? Should he force upon those who did not share his views the risks which they were unwilling to take?

Whatever may have been the exact answer of William Penn to these questions, we at least know what the expectation of the British government was and Penn knew this when he took his great opportunity. In the Charter of Pennsylvania, given by Charles II in 1682, William Penn the Quaker is given the office of commander-in-chief, "to doe all and every other Act and thing which to the charge and office of a Captaine generall of an Army, belongeth or hath accustomed to belong, as fully and freely as any Captaine Generall of an Army hath ever had the same."

Penn's own justly famous "Frame of Government" is singularly silent on this point, though it does specify that the governor and Council "have the care of the peace and safety of the province." Penn, it seems, hoped that by the right beginning it would be possible to conduct a colony so well that the peace and safety could be secured without resort to arms or preparation for warfare, but he knew that some compromise was unavoidable. He was, of course, already familiar with Barclay's reasoning, since the *Apology* antedates the founding of the commonwealth, and in this reasoning he had the basis of the distinction between William Penn as Quaker and William Penn as statesman. This has great dangers in it, as Penn's experience shows, but such dangers are the price pacifists must pay if they try to go beyond the Mennonite position.

That some compromises would be necessary was already made certain when the new colony attracted residents who were not Quakers and who had little understanding of what the idealistic founder intended. More

and more these people brought pressure on the provincial government to make military preparations. Finally, in 1759, the tension was so great that the Quaker members of the legislature resigned in a body and let those "in the mixture" govern those in the mixture. Contemporary Friends are divided in their judgment concerning the wisdom of this act, but it shows how much easier it is to maintain the pacifism of the separated group than the pacifism which seeks to express itself in actual government.

Most of the pacifism of Friends since the seventeenth century has actually been of the type described by Barclay. In most of the wars which have come in countries where Friends have lived, there has been little effort to interfere with war after it is started, but rather to separate themselves from the effort without passing judgment on the "magistrates" who guide the effort. This very separation, when done in humility and without censoriousness, has often set Friends free to engage in the solution of important problems which are occasioned by the war, but which are not adequately handled by others engaged in war efforts. Some of the tasks so undertaken are unpopular ones, such as the help for our American-made refugees, the Japanese-Americans, but they are tasks of importance.

The pacifism of the Quaker tradition often seems somewhat disconcerting to new pacifists who have not had the advantage of participation in a long heritage of this type. It seems so mild. Some are surprised to find that few Quakers claim to be neutral in the present struggle. Others are surprised to find what high respect Quakers tend to have for Christian warriors. But Quaker pacifism is not surprising to those who know the history of Quaker thought. It was developed especially by men who cared too much about the world to separate themselves from it and who knew enough about the world to know that the answers to fundamental questions are seldom simple.

The pacifist heritage is a precious one and really belongs to the entire Body of Christ. It has shown a remarkable continuity through the centuries in spite of some differences in basis as well as in application. It has been modest, but it has been effective. No matter how irenic the testimony of a separated minority may be, the mere fact that it is known to exist produces a salutary and sobering influence on the judgment of political leaders. Most Christians do not accept for themselves the Christian tradition of nonresistance, but most of them have reason to be glad that this tradition exists. They cannot conscientiously take this stand themselves, but they are thankful that there are those who can.



# Specialization and Fragmentation

K. VAN NUYS

**S**PECIALIZATION" and "Fragmentation" are terms that suggest what has produced our civilization and its fundamental characteristics. They also indicate its most fundamental problem, one which underlies most other explanations of the degeneration of the civilization. The shortsighted policies, the dislocations in a technical society, the terrible biases and prejudices of our time are obviously enough results of onesided and fragmentary knowledge. But it is less frequently noticed that the religious deterioration and lack of moral stamina in individuals which many consider the underlying causes of our troubles are themselves underlain by modern fragmentation. For it is the miscellaneousness and confusion of today's knowledge and experience which is the basic factor in people's lack of awareness of God. Among the more highly educated groups, where one looks hopefully for a greater comprehension of the meaning of life, this condition is not less but more acute. Many thinkers have discussed the failure of the curriculum of departmentalized specialties to produce wise persons. We need not go over this. But not so many have seen that it is this fragmentation, of itself, more than any particular rational difficulty, that is the main cause of the religious death of so many scholars and students. Whitehead has said, "The increasing departmentalization of universities during the last hundred years, however necessary for administrative purposes, tends to trivialize the mentality of the teaching profession."<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental task for religious effort today, both in general and in higher education, would seem to be some kind of rectification of this condition of fragmentation of knowledge and experience. Many plans for integrating knowledge have been put forth. But as the educators putting them forth have often been of the Naturalist-Humanist persuasion, so the plans have been largely lacking in a certain conception, namely, that of a *meaningful order* of knowledge. This idea of a meaningful order of subject matter is to be discussed in the following. First comes the problem of:

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<sup>1</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Nature and Life*. p. 16.



## I. The Plethora of Knowledges and Cultures.

This is the source of today's peculiar difficulties: the *quantity* of facts with which we are engulfed. The problem is familiar enough, although it is likely that thinkers fail to keep themselves widely enough awake to its deeper seriousness. Alexis Carrel states it in *Man the Unknown*:

"Our ignorance of ourselves is of a peculiar nature. It does not arise from difficulty in procuring the necessary information, from its inaccuracy, or from its scarcity. On the contrary, it is due to the extreme abundance and confusion of the data accumulated about itself by humanity during the course of the ages. Also to the division of man into an almost infinite number of fragments by the sciences that have endeavored to study his body and his consciousness. This knowledge, to a large extent, has not been utilized. In fact, it is barely utilizable."<sup>2</sup>

We cannot even make use of our knowledge for practical purposes, he says, let alone for interpreting the meaning of life.

Carrel and others realize that the only solution for this problem must be in the nature of selection of facts according to importance. H. G. Wells is the most widely known advocate of "Outlines." He has discussed the theory of his outlines at length and insists that it was possible to give the gist of quantities of material with ". . . its essential form and ideas made all the clearer because they were not embedded in hundreds of illustrations and collaborators' detail."<sup>3</sup> Johnson,<sup>4</sup> in discussing college survey courses, notes that many of the more adequate ones are highly selective. Those at Colgate University, for instance, give a better feeling for the significance and character of a field of knowledge than some of the more detailed "Introductory" courses. We have, then, the bare idea of an outline of knowledge, to be amplified in the following sections.

## II. Specialization and Consequent Poverty of Experience.

The primary result of the mass of knowledge is the necessity of specializing if one wishes to master anything thoroughly. Since a very small sector of knowledge is capable of taking up all of an individual's time, he becomes oblivious to other vitally important aspects of life. Still he tries to interpret life by means of such ideas as he has, even if these virtually cut him off from realizing that life is even supposed to have meaning. He may have no awareness of experience at those levels of synthesis

<sup>2</sup> Carrel, *Man the Unknown*. New York: Harpers, 1935. p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> H. G. Wells, *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*. Garden City: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1931. p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> B. L. Johnson, *What About Survey Courses?* New York: Henry Holt Co., 1937. p. 22f.

where personal and religious meanings can be comprehended. Carrel describes the danger of the specialist:

"Every specialist, owing to a well-known professional bias, believes that he understands the entire human being, while in reality he only grasps a tiny part of him. Fragmentary aspects are considered as representing the whole. And these aspects are taken at random, following the fashion of the moment, which in turn gives more importance to the individual or to society, to physiological appetites or to spiritual activities, to muscular development or to brain power, to beauty or to utility, etc." <sup>5</sup>

The well-nigh universal way of trying to solve the problems of our civilization seems to be to assume blithely that whatever concepts one happens to have hit upon are complete; and that it is sufficient for him to apply them to such items as he can bring to mind on the spur of the moment. Fraser recognizes this problem very clearly:

"Opinions on the most vital contemporary problems today are not only formed but also published after considerations almost all of which are apparently partial and haphazard." <sup>6</sup>

When people are dependent on haphazard contacts with fragments of knowledge a serious condition may arise and does arise. They will fail to discover ideas which are absolutely vital to their own well-being, and that of society which depends on the universal knowing of certain things. Engulfed with knowledges, men may waste a life on a hopelessly poor selection of ideas. They may simply fail to contact life-enriching and soul-saving views.

This problem indicates that our order of knowledge, while being selective, must also be *exhaustive*. It must call attention to *all* of the vital, indispensable considerations of life. And if it were generally received, it would declare to people, "These are the things to which you must pay attention on pain of missing the heights and depths of life." And we could require of self-elected saviors of the world by panaceas to tell us what they have to say in each of the commonly recognized provinces of experience and knowledge. There is such a desperate need in this age, when men are so apt to be chemists, cell physiologists, or aero-engineers before they are sons of God, to pull their attention back out of the one analytical concern toward an imaginative comprehension of integrated and meaningful wholes.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Mowat G. Fraser, *The College of the Future*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937. p. xii, Introduction.

Many exhaustive schemes of knowledge have been drawn up. One of the most carefully worked out was that for the General College of Minnesota. It is quoted here as a typical example of a grouping of knowledge that is almost exhaustive, yet not meaningful. It originally grouped all subject matter into nine areas:

1. Human biological studies (including health, medicine, zoology).
2. Economic studies.
3. Euthenics (Home and Family living).
4. General Arts studies.
5. History and Government.
6. Literature, Speech and Writing.
7. Physical Science.
8. Psychology.
9. Social Science.

Here all knowledge is gathered up into a number of convenient groups which can remind the student that there is a variety of things in the world for him to know about beside his own specialty. But it does not suggest that these areas of knowledge have any one coherent relationship to each other and to a divine plan. They are left lying anywhere in the list, simply as a collection of things that have happened to turn up. Significantly, too, there is no place for or mention of religion at all.

The failure to see any significant sequence or unifying conception in the world leads to our next concern.

### III. Fragmentation and Loss of Coherence and Synthetic Wisdom.

The result of specialization is the dividing of knowledge into unrelated segments, each one of which is known by different men. Thereupon differences between the segments in respect to methods of treatment, logical level and categories of relationship rapidly multiply. The chances for false relationships and of loss of a sense of relative importance become magnified. Different systems of terminology grow up, often with different terms for one concept that may run through several segments; or with the same terms for different concepts. One is given the impression of a planless multiplicity in life. He loses the sense—or perhaps never has it suggested to him—that the universe *does* organize into a coherent design.

It is not only this increase of confusion but, most serious of all, the various fallacies of analyticism that result from fragmentation. Whereas, wisdom is found at the synthetic and personal levels of experience, moderns permit the partial truths of analysis and abstraction to come before and contradict synthetic insights. A real possibility is a widespread loss of

wisdom which the race had worked out long ago in times when life was more integrated and could be experienced as a whole. We find views widely prevalent today more childish than those of ancient races. In the flood of external knowledges and new "gadgets," attention is more than ever before diverted from the ultimate synthetic purposes of life. Perhaps the Revelation had to be delivered early in man's history just because the eternal truths of personal-social wisdom could only be discovered while human life was relatively whole and integrated. For then the details out of which the truths were to be extricated would not be too numerous for them to be discerned. Human thought is like a plant which grows more and more complicated as it develops. Yet the same principles hold at the end as existed at the beginning. A Nazi religion, for instance, is monopolized by a few items from the realm of biology and ethnology. In acting on the resulting onesided view it proves all over again that the less detailedly informed Hebrews had grasped the principles of life more adequately than modern theorists.

There is a great deal of ordinary logical arrangement and simplification that can be done in the order of knowledge. We remember having seen innumerable significant summaries, inclusive principles and ways of grouping and relating things. But they have been put out haphazardly by different thinkers. We never know whether they were exhaustive, whether they dovetail with each other, whether they are in the same realm of discourse or whether one includes another. We suspect that if they could all be got together, many redundancies and parallelisms would cancel out until a much greater measure of simplicity and continuity would be revealed.

What is necessary is definite, protracted, tough mental effort upon these principles of sequence which present themselves as frames upon which to hang subject matter. It is a kind of thought which seems not to have been done with sufficient persistence by anyone as yet and is difficult to describe and illustrate. It is different from logical demonstration in argument, with its one-way chain of implications. It has a resemblance to the thinking that is done in artistic creation, with its arranging and balancing of elements. One feels one's way until he has a structure in which his various principles of order find their greatest optimum expression. One seeks symmetries, climactic points, subordination and hierarchical organization. It is a kind of thought that is intimately bound up with the task of integration and the dealing with wholes.

There are many principles of order which need to be expressed in the very layout of subject matter. Perhaps the most important is the one already suggested: analysis versus synthesis. It should be made plain that the synthetic levels of knowledge and experience are one thing, and not replacable by the analytical ones. Only at the fully inclusive, synthetic, personal levels can one expect to plumb that deepest experience in which he can attain knowledge of God and understand His Revelation. This should eliminate some of the time wasted by students in supposing that some analytical irrelevancy utterly cuts off their hope of eventually grasping something of God's plan.

To return to the Minnesota plan, we can see that this principle would dictate one certain overall order rather than any other. If we begin with analytical levels of knowledge, the first subject would be:

7. Physical Science, followed by
  1. Biological studies.
  8. Psychology.
  - 5a. History (naturally preceding social sciences in time).
  2. Economics; 3. Euthenics; 5b. Government; 9. Social Science; all being at the social level.
  6. Literature; and 4. Arts naturally fall together, being expressive in significance.
- Religion and Philosophy should cap the list as being the most fully synthetic studies.

This is the merest suggestion of how a certain order is called for by logical principles. It is not yet, however, a meaningful order.

#### IV. The Loss of a Sense of Meaning.

Here is the crux of the problem of fragmentation. All ages in the past have at least assumed that reality was purposeful and meaningful, even if they were not sure what the meaning was. Men remained sufficiently aware of personal realities to give them precedence in interpreting the universe. But now for the first time in history masses of men are "feeling" that the world is purposeless. Their lives, their impressions, their bits of analytical information have become too miscellaneous for them to sense a meaning informing all things. This is why we live in the first completely "profane" culture of history, for the sacred cannot exist without a belief that all things are integral in a divine plan. Meiklejohn gives one of the best descriptions of this threatening development, especially in our centers of learning.

"The Anglo-American culture to which our colleges belong has gone to pieces. And its colleges have gone to pieces with it. Why has it happened? . . . British and American colleges were established primarily upon a basis of religious faith. They expressed a belief in the Mind and Will of God. And that belief gave unity to knowledge. It gave unity to human action and to the intelligence which guided action."<sup>7</sup>

" . . . The educational theorizing of the last half-century has been clearly marked by the conviction that for us human life is essentially unintelligible and chaotic. When President Eliot advocated the elective system . . . , when John Dewey described intelligence as dealing with, and only with, 'a plurality of problematic situations,' they were saying that the human mind is a thing of shreds and patches, that its thinking is, as a whole, meaningless."<sup>8</sup>

I have so far suggested that there are certain formal principles in the universe upon which a consensus as to what the order of knowledge should be, probably could be based. But these in themselves do not make it yet a *meaningful* order. To be meaningful order must lead up to some ultimate purpose which its ordered structure is seen to serve and imply, and which calls for all the subordinate facts to take the place that they do. The sequences and graphic arrangement of subject matter as such will then declare significant meanings, and show forth the relations to the ultimate meaning.

What conception of ultimate meaning can we use? The present approach permits an interesting evaluation of the endeavor of the naturalists and humanists to get along without God. They say that the purposes and welfare of men are the only purpose we can know. Meiklejohn, after his acute analysis of the disintegration of culture due to the loss of a basis of meaning in God, surprises us by undertaking to restore unity without God. He says that we must make the Christian assertion of the brotherhood of man without reference to the Christian God myth. "The purposes which, in the past, we have attributed to the mind and will of God, we must now adopt by our own minds and wills."<sup>9</sup>

What would this humanist ultimate imply as to an order of knowledge? Significantly enough, *they* do not usually look for any meaningful plan of knowledge. The Minnesota plan exactly illustrates where the humanist stops: the plan for the college curriculum is organized around the concept of human needs. There is general consensus as to the areas of knowledge: a physical science group, a biological group, etc., seem quite

<sup>7</sup> A. Meiklejohn, "The Role of the Liberal Arts College," in *Learning and Living*. Walker Hill, ed. & pub., Chicago, 1943. p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 45.



universally agreed to. But these are not seen as "belonging" in some one meaningful sequence. The "problem approach" is defended. It is said that the only integration of knowledge that can be meaningful to the student is that in which useful parts of knowledge are organized toward some need or curiosity of his. There is no concern with an objective order of reality for its own sake. Knowledge is seen as an arbitrary collection of items into which students are to dip and pull out whatever they feel a need for.

This lack of concern betrays the fact that they are not really speaking of "meaning" at all—not when they talk only of human purposes and goals. "Meaning" has to refer to the structure of reality itself which *contains* human life. It has to include the universe, the cosmic purpose for which both life and the universe have been created. Human purposes as well as objective reality therefore *would* all fit together in one inevitable order. Meiklejohn readily admits, of course, that he believes there can be no "knowing" at this level. Actually, for him, knowledge about the world has no one order of its own. He can only pull out the more useful pieces of reality and arrange them under the human needs and purposes. The rest of reality would be "left over." How can one really have "unity" on this basis? He is only reasserting the conceptions which originally inevitably destroyed the unity as he himself has shown.

We move on, then, to the theist idea of ultimate meaning. This holds that there *is* an all-inclusive, cosmic plan of an all-powerful, personal Intelligence; that the finite being *can* have a kind of experience through which he gains knowledge of Him, and that all things *do* fall into place in a design. The important thing to notice is that this experience develops in proportion as the person attains a more and more fully synthetic and integrated personal level of comprehension. This is in total contrast to a specialization that both analyzes one's thought into fragments, and leads to a concentration on a one-sided selection of these, with their highly skewed emphasis. This "cripples" the mind, as it were, for having this experience, as well as fills it with positively false partial reasonings. The naturalist-humanist's lack of interest in a meaningful order of knowledge, and his failure to perceive any cosmic meaning are now seen to indicate only one thing: that he remains caught in the fragmentation of his knowledge and experience. He has cut himself off from those synthetic levels of personal experience where the drama of salvation from sin can only be known. He is apt to have accepted some partial idea as final and allowed it to stop him

from pushing on to see how it can be transcended and deepened into an integral unit in a greater design.

The supreme purpose of the order of knowledge, then, is to do the preliminary task of waking the specialists of our age to that which is involved in religious experience and knowledge. It will even, insofar as it is an adequate representation of integrated reality, lead up to and imply the fact of God's existence. The order will show the student the general direction in which he must look and the type of thing he must attend to before he can even *expect* to grasp the religious meaning of the universe; and it will provide a helpful instrument for grasping that meaning. I do not mean that this rather intellectual order of knowledge forms any logical proof of God's existence or will compel belief. Rather it simply helps to "prepare" one for knowing God. It will help him over the stumbling blocks of partial ideas or premature conclusions and will give his mind "practice" in imaginatively apprehending broad meanings. On this rests the possibility of that most ultimate and inclusive experience in which God can be sensed in all and through all.

It is an astonishing fact that theists have not been more inclined than naturalists in recent centuries to work on an inclusive order of knowledge. If they have applied themselves to the question of integration of knowledge at all, they have taken their ultimate conception conceived as a quite isolated nugget of truth itself, and applied it opportunistically to some of the areas of knowledge. They assumed that it probably had relationships to the rest of the areas as well. As Brown<sup>10</sup> has said, theology accepted the place which secularists assigned to it: a separate department of thought concerned with its particular problem, and content to regard the other disciplines as independent additional contents of the universe. Religionists were willing to give an opinion, if someone asked them for one, after more or less extemporized thought, about the place of these things in God's plan. But that the explicit placing of these knowledges as integral building blocks in a great divine design might be necessary in the task of enabling students to apprehend God, has not been an active notion since St. Thomas. But theism perhaps never before has had to face such a serious condition of fragmentation as it does today. It usually could count on most people putting personal experience first, and causal analyses of things second. Today, however, there is evidently an enormous need of pulling people

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<sup>10</sup> William Adams Brown, *The Case for Theology in the University*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938. p. 2.

up to whole experience out of exclusive attention to meaningless analysis and fragmentation.

#### VI. The Loss of the Sense of Wonder and Sacredness.

All of the results of fragmentation which have been discussed lead up to this deepest and most characteristic lack in our civilization: the loss of awareness of mystery, of reverence for the world, of the holy importance of things. The sense of God's purpose in all things, giving them consequence and hallowedness, is the great, unprecedented loss of our civilization. It is the most essential complement of the great, unprecedented specialization and fragmentation of that civilization. Fragmentary apprehension of life, in preventing students from experiencing the meaning of it, is the cause of their failure to feel the strangeness and glory that is really there. People who do have this sense have reason to complain of the prosaic attitudes, of the "stuffiness" of our lives.

Without this sense, it is impossible to grasp the real *importance* of anything—particularly of the humanists' desire for the welfare and brotherhood of man. The best that a humanist civilization can present for our devotion is comparatively tawdry and dull. We are used to constant depreciations of life and man by the specialists. Life is "merely" this or that. Man is "merely" a bunch of gallivanting glands. The world is "merely" a cold ash, the sun "merely" a minor star. And the religions we do have, partaking of this noninclusiveness and fragmentariness, fall very short in grasping and expressing the real grandeur of things. The best illustration of the contrast in attitude I know of, was in zoology courses. As ordinarily taught, this subject is surrounded with the assumption that biological "explanations" are "reducing" the human entity to something quite ordinary and unmysterious. But for one who has an adequate grasp on meaningful experience and the universe as God's work, this same study becomes one of the most overpoweringly inspiring ones there is. It gives him a sense of delighted wonder about the creature man that is inexhaustible. Without restoring the ability to know God through whole experience of life, and thence in all the knowledges, all other efforts to improve conditions—humanist and theist as well—will be robbed of their main force.

The most characteristic service of all which the order of knowledge is to perform is this: once we have attained a conviction of the existence of a cosmic purpose (through Revelation, or personal experience, perhaps helped by the order itself), the order is then the device for bringing this

hallowing truth down into intimate contact with the details and departments of life and knowledge. It has put all things into their allotted place as integral elements in the divine structure. Thus they may take on the significance and wonder which the holy purpose confers on them.

If the order of knowledge were to become the basis of curricula, it would provide that subjects be taught so that the wonder and importance that is in them would be indicated. A student of zoology, for instance, should not fail to be made awake to the sense of mystery and holiness of what is before him there. At present neither science nor religion is performing this task. The scientists are certainly not interested in the aspect of wonder and awe which is rightly implied by their material (when seen in relation to God's creation and purpose). Neither do the religionists, concentrating on Revelation, do the work of making explicit the wonder which it confers on all lower levels of knowledge. But the more we perfect the order of knowledge and study it, the more this should become explicit.

I conceive the outline order as existing in the background, as it were, of students' and professors' minds. Perhaps it would have to be presented as such briefly at the beginning of the college course. From then on the student would continually be referring his more detailed learning to it, "filling it in." It would cause his learning always to increase his imaginative grasp on the divine plan, rather than cutting him off from it. In summary the order would be referred to in selecting vitally necessary things all should know; in making plain to specialists where they stand in the whole of things; in pointing up the main distinctions and relationships running through knowledge; in indicating toward what sort of thing one should expect to look for religion; and as a sort of "map" of knowledge to help in the imaginative grasp of all things as aspects of a wonderful, holy and divine plan of the universe.

The emphasis here is different from Hutchins' plan of integrating knowledge by teaching metaphysics in addition to it; or Brown's similar idea with regard to theology; or Stringfellow's plan of reading through past efforts at integrating past knowledge; or the various survey courses' aim of giving a broad sampling of various knowledges. The emphasis is to make these knowledges *be* the content of religious awareness, in being known as facets of a meaningful design. They must be taught so that the grandeur of the whole is shed upon them; and so that their own partiality does not cause a preliminary alienation of the student from all effort even to begin the search for God.

All teaching, then, would take on a religious dimension. Religious education cannot really be done in any other way. The religious education department would still need to teach the actual content of the ultimate meaning itself—God and salvation. But it could only do this adequately with the co-operation of all the other departments. The religious attitude is not just in knowing the theory of salvation; it must also come from experiencing sacredness and mystery in all the concrete details of life everywhere. It seems that only the order of knowledge can perform this impregnation of all things with religious meaning; and, obversely, can cause all things to body forth and contribute to the religious meaning by virtue of their integral place in the design.

It is probably foolhardy to expect a fundamentally valid upturn from the present evil condition of the world to begin until the vital, inspiring, emotionally vivid feeling for God has again been widely cultivated in individual minds. It is necessary as a foundation for the sense of importance of men and of our duties toward them and God. As long as higher education continues to cultivate fragmentary views of life, with resultant thinness and tawdriness of attitudes toward the Lord's creation, we can probably count on continuing the long toboggan ride toward paganism's low estimate of values. Neither a disconnected assertion of the truth of ancient revelation, nor a merely broad sampling of the areas of knowledge will perform this task of cultivating a lively sense of the sublimity of God. College religious education must become a matter of integrating the whole body of facts into a design supporting and adding unfathomable grandeur to our knowledge of God and His purpose of salvation.

## Conservatism States Its Case

HILLYER H. STRATON

**F**OR nearly a decade many religious leaders who once were proud to be known in their own intellectual circles as liberals have frequently and emphatically been consigning liberalistic religion to the limbo of the hoopskirt and other Victorian oddities. Fundamentalists have accepted each such broadside with a grim satisfaction accompanied in many instances by a smug sense of "I told you so." A liberalism which is little more than a deterministic naturalism is happily dead. But to clear up our terminology such liberalism ought far better to be classified as modernism. Nearly every leader of religious thought who has remained within the great stream of the Christian tradition has recognized and publicly pointed out that the type of modernism which was rapidly becoming humanism with a strong antireligious trend would have to be abandoned if a vital Christianity was to remain.

It is no part of this discussion to analyze the history, the philosophy or the merits of liberalism except to say that the tendencies of extreme liberalism or modernism, as Newman pointed out, were to "subject to human judgment those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent of it."<sup>1</sup> It is evident that complete anarchy ultimately lay this way. Modernism which took a rosily optimistic view of life completely overlooked the terrible reality of sin and its results as Niebuhr has said so vigorously. Modernism endeavored to reduce faith to the standards that could be verified by sense and reason, but these standards were not truly religious. Every great religious personality ultimately has found God through faith rather than through signs or even philosophy. The liberalism which flowered into modernism arose as a reaction against a supernaturalism which was largely magical in its concepts. It served a definite purpose, for Jesus rejected a cheap supernaturalism as a travesty upon a great God and so should we. On the other hand, strong conservatives have always known that a vital faith must hold the assurance that God's arm is not shortened at all and that He will deliver in His own way and in His own time. When the Church has lost sight of the latter supreme truth it has lost in power just to that extent.

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<sup>1</sup>*Apologia*, Note 2.



One of the reasons for the death of modernism has been its low birth rate. As Nels Ferré, that brilliant young theologian, has pointed out, a movement can only live so long on inherited spiritual capital.<sup>2</sup> If the liberalism that is better known as modernism is happily dead, the liberal attitude toward life and religion is not gone and it would be a sad day were it to die. By the liberal attitude we mean the willingness to learn, the readiness to accept new truth, the recognition that the Holy Spirit is still at work in the world even as Jesus promised, and that the Holy Spirit is still guiding men of good will into a greater knowledge and appreciation of all that God has in store for them that love Him. Such an attitude can be thoroughly loyal to the Bible as the authoritative revelation of God and yet recognize that the Word of God is not a static sword hanging above a complacent mantelpiece, but that it is a vital, piercing weapon cutting out the old and the dead and leading in the battle for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth for which Jesus so fervently prayed.

Just as there is and should be a distinction between liberalism and modernism, so ought there to be a distinction between conservatism and fundamentalism or reactionism of an extreme character. The true conservative has always wanted to strengthen those things which remain, holding loyalty to the faith once for all delivered. The history and the ideals of the past have furnished his inspiration for pressing with courage into the future. Probably former President George Barton Cutten, of Colgate, has given us the best definition of a conservative as "A person who has an open mind to the proved values of the past and wishes to be reasonably sure of his course before he disrupts the conditions under which these values have been developed and matured." Though Amos has been claimed as a brilliant liberal of his day, pointing Israel to a more glorious vision of God, his whole message was based on a conservative predicate. "Thus saith the Lord for three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof because they have despised the law of the Lord and *have not kept his commandments*." Whatever one may believe about the origin of the Pentateuch, and the true conservative would think Moses had something to do with it, Amos certainly harked back to commandments that God had given in the past as a basis for a valiant call to righteousness in the day in which he lived. From one standpoint Jesus was the great religious liberal of all times, yet we find Jesus going back of the law to the eternal Word of God. Jesus went back centuries in the

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<sup>2</sup> Lecture, Michigan Pastors' Conference, Ann Arbor, January 18, 1943.

history of His people to find the very heart of religion for His day and for all future days, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." He had a conservatism that was vital, vibrant and living, that looked to Moses as a great prophet, but that could go behind Moses to the greater and the eternal Word of forgiveness that He knew was in the heart of His heavenly Father. Because of the law's demands and the circumstances of his day, Moses may have commanded stoning, but Jesus exhibited the true mind of God which forgives where there is honest penitence, so He could say, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." A genuine prophet's conservatism has been classically pointed out by William Temple: "Every prophet's appeal is not to a new principle, but to a new application of an old principle, so that he often presents himself as urging a return to the better ways of past generations. Few radical reformers can hope for great success who are unable to present themselves with perfect honesty as the only true conservatives."<sup>3</sup>

"Fundamentalism" was once a good word coined by one of the sweetest spirited and most genuinely Christian of men. It has fallen on evil days, for in many cases it has been adopted by narrow reactionaries, many of whom are still fighting battles long since decided. For instance, some are contending for an absolute biblical inerrancy which intelligent conservatives have never held. Such mechanistic views of inspiration are and have been rejected by the greatest of conservative scholars almost from the beginning. The best theory of inspiration the author knows was that of the late, great and conservative scholar, Bernard C. Taylor, of Crozer and Eastern Baptist seminaries, "God inspired men to write what He wanted them to write." A reactionary is always living in the good old days which, if he could go back to them, he would discover were not so good after all. Of whatever school we may be, it should make all truly good men humble to remember that the Pharisee who thanked God that he was not like other fellows was a typical reactionary. He and his kind ultimately crucified Jesus. They were looking for a Messiah whose fan was in His hand, and who rode the white horse of a conqueror. But the Messiah came as a Carpenter from Galilee; their only response was the extreme literalism which asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

The trend back toward traditional theology has been marked and steady though it has never been a stampede. Religious liberals have happily receded from a dogmatism that was certainly unbecoming in those who claimed a liberalism for themselves that they often denied to others who

<sup>3</sup> *Nature, Man and God*. Macmillan, London, 1940, p. 176.

disagreed with them. On the other side there has been a steady advance on the part of conservatives toward the fuller understanding that the gospel is good news to the poor as well as redemption to the sinner. This rapprochement between liberals and conservatives may find an ultimate synthesis in the truly Christian position that Jesus Himself unquestionably occupied. Liberals have exhibited a healthy confession of their own failures and conservatives are increasingly recognizing the ultimate values of human liberties and biblical interpretations that are valid for our own time. For years in Britain and on the continent men who are professed conservatives have not been accused of being intellectual bankrupts, nor have those who prefer to be classed as liberals been castigated as being without the Christian fold. It will be a happy day when this position prevails in our own land.

What is the attitude of the conservative toward the Bible? For one thing intelligent conservatives have long since accepted critical and historical findings about the Book. True, they have had to serve as a counterweight against radical extremes on the part of certain critical scholars. Yet it is interesting to observe that in instance after instance their reluctance to accept every new and strange hypothesis propounded by scholars and critics has been vindicated by a later scholarship. In some cases biblical investigators were as much interested in advocating a new view in order to get a hearing in the scholarly world, as they were in advancing the cause of truth. The wise conservative has rejoiced in the increased knowledge of the Bible which scholarly research has afforded. It has become a far more vital book whose authority in the realm of religion is increasingly recognized. No better proof of the attitude of a sane conservatism toward the Bible is seen than in the work of Doctor Samuel Cartledge, who has given us *A Conservative Introduction to the New Testament* and *A Conservative Introduction to the Old Testament*. A review of the latter in the *Christian Century* for June, 1943, employed the term "epoch-making" when describing this book. Such strong language is used because an avowed conservative makes use of the method and often accepts the results of what has hitherto been considered a purely liberal method of understanding the Bible. That conservatives can also be scientific and historical as biblical scholars is a revelation to many with a certain type of liberal training. However, were these same liberals better acquainted with the whole field of biblical scholarship they would recognize that there have been scores of scholars whose mental integrity is unquestioned, whose methods are as coldly scientific as could be desired, and yet whose conclusions based on their scholarly inquiry have often been what we would call tradi-

tional. The thorough scholarship of many conservatives is seen in article after article in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.

When any new hypothesis is advanced in the field of biblical scholarship, even though it may not be bizarre, the conservatism of the average conservative is going to come to the fore. He may ultimately accept this new position, but his very conservatism will make him much more cautious about giving up traditional positions to accept new views that may or may not live. An enlightening exercise for an unreconstructed liberal is to read "the assured results of criticism" in religious tomes written a few decades ago. The "assured results" are almost laughable in the light of further inquiry and knowledge. It was once seriously argued that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because men did not know how to write in 1400 B. C.

Through the years the conservative has believed the Bible to be the authoritative Word of God. It is not simply *a word* of God, but it is *the Word*. Though believing that all of it is inspired, he has ever recognized that not all parts of the Bible are of equal value. No sane conservative has ever argued that the genealogical tables of Numbers have the same religious value as the Twenty-third Psalm or the Sermon on the Mount. The thumb marks in his own Bible are vivid evidence of the passages to which he turns the most often. Through the years the conservative has felt that the Bible speaks a relevant message for our own day. In days when humanistic Victorian optimism was all the fashion the conservative saw in the Bible the record of human sin. The cross told him that no matter what might be the philosophic and theological fashion, sin was a terrible reality that cost God in Christ much in the redemption of the human race. This acceptance of the authority of God's Word was not a blind acceptance of a cosmic, Fascist pronunciamiento. It was the authority of moral righteousness that emanates from every page of the Bible. In the field of morality the biblical attitude toward sin remained "one of those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent" of human judgment. The biblical attitude toward other revealed doctrines, say for instance, the atonement, will increasingly be recognized as true and correct. Contending that the Bible is *the Word* of God rather than *a Word* simply contained in the Bible is more than a quibble over an article.<sup>4</sup> If the Bible is *the Word* it will speak authoritatively in days when

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<sup>4</sup> For further amplification see Chapter 3, "The Bible, the Source of Our Faith," in the author's *Baptists, Their Message and Mission*. Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1941, p. 43f.

its message is running counter to popular opinion. Given man's propensity for hedonism, intellectual arrogance and spiritual self-sufficiency this is a very needed corrective.

Conservatives by their nature take more kindly to a sane literalism than do others. Those that do not deny *a priori*, the fact of miracle, believe the record when it says that the children of Israel walked through the Red Sea. The method God employed in this particular instance happens to be explained, but had it been omitted the conservative would tend to believe the incident nonetheless as not necessarily improbable in the light of the power of God. Simply because the conservative may be a literalist in regard to certain passages does not mean that he is an obscurantist who is not aware of the different types of literature one finds in the Bible, that parts of it are poetry, parts are apocalyptic, and parts are prose and are to be understood in the correct sense of those literary forms. Even the most ardent literalist would scarcely claim that the Bible teaches that the trees are to grow physical hands when the psalmist sings, "*The trees of the field shall clap their hands.*" It may also come as a surprise to learn that not all conservatives believe that the book of Jonah is to be understood as an historical document. One can believe in miracles and still hold that the book of Jonah could well be a missionary parable teaching a universalistic message men would do well to learn today. On the other hand, there are other intelligent conservatives who recognize that as history the narrative is extraordinary, but they nevertheless believe that it is not so improbable as to be beyond the realm of possibility.

In recent years we have witnessed the rise of what is known as biblical realism. Hendrick Kraemer gave vitality to this expression.<sup>5</sup> This is a return to the Bible as the source of information about both God and man and their relationship one to the other. The Bible has a message as pertinent for our own day as when the revelation was originally given to the ancient prophets. This biblical realism uses the Bible as the norm for defining truth. It speaks a message from God to us and should be considered as the authoritative and revealed Word of God. Scholars and theologians as well as preachers and statesmen are returning to the Bible and are finding God's truth for men within its pages.

The attempt to preserve the faith by making the distinctive mark of the conservative one who accepts the authority of the Bible has inherent

<sup>5</sup> See his magnificent third chapter in *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. Harper & Bros., New York, 1938, p. 61f.



weaknesses because what one man finds authoritative in the Bible the other man questions. All will agree that the Bible is authoritative in the realm of morals, religion and the revelation of the mind of God. The Bible must be and will be interpreted in the light of the present day. It is going to be interpreted by those who call themselves liberals and those who call themselves conservatives; neither can escape it. In his own heart the man who says he is a literalist, if he were closely questioned, would not necessarily say that he believed that men would have to return to fighting with swords and spears before Isaiah's prophecy about beating swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks will be fulfilled. Such an inherent literalist in expounding this passage, in which he believes most heartily, would interpret it by pointing out that we now fight with machine guns and aeroplanes and that Isaiah is teaching that the weapons of war will be turned into the instruments of peace. This is simply interpreting the scripture aright, understanding its message for our own day. Not to do so is to be guilty of "wresting scripture" and not "rightly dividing the word of truth." A very literalistic Presbyterian when confronted with the New Testament evidence for baptism by immersion still clings to his inherited custom of sprinkling. The literalistic Baptist when reading the account of the washing of the disciples' feet does not necessarily become a washer of feet himself. He interprets the scripture in the light of his particular training. Both the Presbyterian and the Baptist proclaim their literalism and their belief in the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, but when it comes to the particular instance they interpret. They should likewise allow others to interpret who are not quite as literally minded as themselves.

The fundamental difference between the extreme liberal or modernist and the conservative is and has been historically the attitude toward the supernatural. This is bound up in God's personal relation to men and is seen particularly in the birth, the life, the death and the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The conservative has held to a high and holy supernaturalism often tinged with mysticism. It is a supernaturalism based on the understanding of God as personal. He acts as we would expect one person to act in his relation with another. William James has long since given us just such a supernaturalism, as well as an intelligent rationale for it.<sup>6</sup> Yet it cannot be explained. It is like love—it has to be felt and it is felt in terms of a God who really sent His Son into the world that the

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<sup>6</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Modern Library, New York, p. 506f.



world through Him might be saved. A case in point is the virgin birth. As a supernaturalist the conservative can accept the wonder and the rightness of human fatherhood, yet still believe that the records as found in Matthew and Luke best account for the birth of Jesus and the subsequent life of the God-man. From a philosophical standpoint such a view maintains the great truth that God entered uniquely into the stream of humanity in the gift of His Son to be the Saviour of mankind. Conservatives ought to take their stand for a sane, sensible and yet withal mystical supernaturalism. They can hold this battle line for an eternity with clear minds, good consciences and an assurance that if we know anything about God we will find Him somewhere in this area. The true conservative is at heart a genuine trinitarian, whereas the true liberal, if he is thoroughly honest, is at heart a unitarian. Conservatives ought to find complete fellowship with all who are honestly ready to accept the trinitarian position.

From the days of the great creeds of Chalcedon and Nicaea down to the Madras Conference with its modern creed, *"The Faith by Which the Church Lives,"* Christians have not hesitated to define their positions nor should they. But there is a strange reluctance on the part of some to say unequivocally where they stand. This is unfortunate for today the world is wanting and needing a sure word. Christians have this word, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and they ought not to hesitate to say so. There will be different understandings of just what took place when Christ "took upon himself the form of man and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross," but the important point is to accept it as biblical realism and primary Christian truth.

Today there is an increasing and healthy interest in Christology. One can never plumb the mind of God to find Him out, but the man Christ Jesus stands and will stand as a conscience to the world. Son of Man, Son of God, He is not only adequate to heal the hurt of the world, but to bind together good and true men of varying schools who need to learn again that Jesus Himself was somewhat of a literalist and that He meant what He said. When His disciples in the long ago tried to be religious isolationists and prevent a fellow who was casting out devils in the name of their Master from carrying on His good work, it was Jesus who quietly remarked: "Forbid him not; he that is not against me is for me."

## Religious Values in Modern Poetry

CECIL F. WILSON

**M**ODERN poetry may be said to begin with Thomas Hardy or Gerard Manley Hopkins, and includes such names as Housman, Yeats, Kipling, Masfield, De La Mare, Noyes, Robinson, Lindsay, Sandburg, the Benés, Ransom, Cummings, MacLeish and many others. Our subject is so overwhelming in scope that we must first limit ourselves to living writers, and then, narrowing the field still further, confine our discussion to seven of these. While these may not be the seven greatest living poets, not one of them could be left out of any list of the most significant poets of today.

In his remarkable essay, "A Hope for Poetry," Cecil Day Lewis informs us that modern poetry turns back for most of its inspiration to Gerard Manley Hopkins, Wilfrid Owen and T. S. Eliot. As Eliot is the only one of these three still living we shall begin with him.

T. S. Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1888. He received his A.B. and M.A. from Harvard University; then went to England, and has lived there ever since. In 1917 appeared "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," which some critics still acclaim his greatest poem. Never before had such a sense of frustration and the meaninglessness of life been portrayed by a poet. This is the way it begins—

"Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherized upon a table;  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels  
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:  
Streets that follow like a tedious argument  
Of insidious intent  
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . . .  
Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'  
Let us go and make our visit."<sup>1</sup>

That opening verse will serve to introduce us to Eliot. Note first the fact that we must read this poetry slowly and thoughtfully if we would get any idea of its meaning—and this is one of the easier portions of his

<sup>1</sup> *Collected Poems of T. S. Eliot*, p. 24. Used by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

work. Eliot has something to say that often includes religious values—but we cannot get it in one reading. We must slow down and think. That in itself is rather good training for us of the ministry. Along with our people we may be prone to grasp only the easier thing—the least difficult book—the jingling poetry—and quite ready to set aside as worthless the more involved work of such a poet as Eliot. But ministers, of all people, should be careful thinkers, pondering, not the swift, passing things of life, but the slower, permanent things.

In "Prufrock" we have the theme that interested Eliot for some years; that still continues in the background of his thinking, namely, the sameness and sordidness and meaninglessness of much of human existence in this world, the ceaseless repetition of useless acts. This picture of frustration comes to its full development in his volume, "The Wasteland." Consider a description typical of that piece of poetry—

"Unreal city,  
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,  
I had not thought death had undone so many.  
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,  
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.  
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street  
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours  
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine."<sup>2</sup>

But fortunately the poet of "The Wasteland" was not content to remain forever there. Eliot was too serious a thinker to believe that "The Wasteland" was the final comment upon life in this world. In 1928 he declared himself a classicist in literature, an Anglo-Catholic in religion and a royalist in politics. These positions, he believed, raised him above and out of the Wasteland of life.

"Ash Wednesday" appeared in 1930, and since then Eliot's poetry has been greatly concerned in bringing the Christian position, with an Anglo-Catholic slant, to bear upon the souls in the frustrated, dry, evil and uninteresting world. Like most of his poetry, "Ash Wednesday" is subtle in its meaning. It follows something of the same scheme as "The Wasteland," closing with this broken childlike prayer:

"Blessed sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit  
of the garden,  
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood  
Teach us to care and not to care

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 71.

Teach us to sit still  
 Even among these rocks,  
 Our peace in His will  
 And even among these rocks  
 Sister, mother  
 And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,  
 Suffer me not to be separated  
 And let my cry come unto Thee."<sup>3</sup>

Eliot's supreme fault is that he appears to be interested only in his own personal salvation and that of those other individuals who attend his message, and never in the reform or general uplift of all humanity. He has no social gospel in his poetry, for the world can be nothing but a "Wasteland," and it is all that one can do to save himself.

Eliot's recent book, *Four Quartets*, gives us an additional appreciation of the rare beauty to which his style can attain as it reaches the heights. How musical, how perfect is such a bit of poetry as this:

Footfalls echo in the memory  
 Down the passage which we did not take  
 Towards the door we never opened  
 Into the rose-garden.<sup>4</sup>

But Eliot's view of the world and his panacea for the world's frustrated people is the same in his latest writing. The world—time—space—everything is to be characterized by such words as these:

Ridiculous the waste sad time  
 Stretching before and after.<sup>5</sup>

There is no progress,

There is only the fight to recover what has been lost  
 And found and lost again and again.<sup>6</sup>

The one hope is

Only the hardly, barely prayable  
 Prayer of the one Annunciation.<sup>7</sup>

Next we turn to the three most significant younger poets of England—W. H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis and Stephen Spender. Strangely enough, these writers are not at all concerned with saving themselves. They are not even religious. But they are ardently fascinated with the task of saving the world.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> *Four Quartets*, 1943, p. 3. Printed by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8. <sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17. <sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23.

Wystan Hugh Auden was born in 1907, and, since the death of W. B. Yeats, has generally been considered to be England's greatest poet. Recently, however, he has come to America and has now taken out his first citizenship papers. From the standpoint of genius a fair exchange is now being accomplished. We contributed Eliot to England and England is now about to furnish Auden to us.

Auden's poetry is the expression of his age, perhaps more than any other present-day bard. His is the world of machinery, of industry, of the whirr of wheels, and the swift flight of the airplane. He is concerned with economics, especially labor problems, with wars and race hatreds and intolerance. Not of trees or flowers does he rhyme, but

Tram lines and slagheaps, pieces of machinery  
That was and still is, my ideal scenery.<sup>8</sup>

He identifies himself with the workers, for even amidst the whistling of motors Auden always thinks of the persons who are running them or who are the victims of their inhumanness. He loves the machinery of his age but he makes it only the background for his consideration of the men, women and children who are the real center of his picture. In his interest in persons rather than things, he is certainly following the Master of Men, although he seldom ever mentions Him.

Auden is no optimist concerning present conditions. When the war began in September of 1939 he wrote a poem which begins:

"I sit in one of the dives  
On Fifty-second Street  
Uncertain and afraid  
As the clever hopes expire  
Of a low dishonest decade."<sup>9</sup>

He paints the inevitable tragedy which shall come if men do not transform their civilization so that it deals fairly with all human beings. He pictures this judgment in as vivid terms as any Old Testament prophet; and, if one can forget the exclusion of God, how Amoslike is this prophet writing:

"All formulas were tried to still  
The scratching on the window-sill,  
All bolts of custom made secure  
Against the pressure on the door,  
But up the staircase of events

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<sup>8</sup> Auden: "Letter to Lord Byron." Quoted in Rica Brenner: *Poets of Our Time*. Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1941. p. 264.

<sup>9</sup> *Another Time*, 1940, Random House, New York. p. 98.

Carrying his special instruments,  
To every bedside all the same  
The dreadful figure swiftly came."<sup>10</sup>

Although Auden is not at all satisfied with present conditions, he thoroughly believes in the hope of a better tomorrow. If mankind will awake and throw off the selfishness of the present there can be a glorious age in the future. He is no pessimist concerning the possibilities inherent within humanity. His new order is not a Kingdom of God, but rather a world order of remade men and systems achieved without reference to a deity of any kind.

Like Auden, our next poet, Cecil Day Lewis, is concerned with this immediate world and with man in its midst. He makes no reference to God. He wants humanity to have its full chance for development unhampered by its present systems. Lewis' most significant piece of poetry for those concerned with religion is the long poem, "The Magnetic Mountain."

"Somewhere beyond the railheads  
Of reason, south or north,  
Lies a magnetic mountain  
Riveting sky to earth."<sup>11</sup>

This mountain is death and whatever is beyond it. Perhaps we may also say it is the final place of the summing up of the true values of life. How shall men reach this magnetic mountain when there is no railway to carry them beyond the getting-off place? Various voices speak their theories of what life should be like if man is to reach his magnetic mountain. Defenders of good ways of life speak. Enemies of things as they are have their word. These are all wrong, however. The final answer of the poem is that only in action for the good of all humanity is to be found the true way of life, the road up "Magnetic Mountain."

"Now is your moment, O hang-fire heart;  
The ice is breaking, the death-grip relaxes,  
Luck's turned. Submit to your star and take  
Command, Oh start the attacking movement!"<sup>12</sup>

Begin the attacking movement against the social and economic wrongs of society and you will find the true end of being, says Day Lewis. His hope is expressed in Section 34 in these words:

<sup>10</sup> *The Double Man*, 1941, Random House, New York. p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> *Collected Poems, 1929-1933, 1935*, Random House, New York. p. 108.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 142.



"Publish the vision, broadcast and screen it,  
 Of a world where the will of all shall be raised to highest power,  
 Village or factory shall form the unit.  
 Control shall be from the centers, quick brain, warm heart,  
 And the bearings bathed in a pure  
 Fluid of sympathy. There possessions no more shall be part  
 Of the man,

. . . . .  
 Each shall give of his best. It shall seem proper  
 For all to share what all produced."<sup>13</sup>

Here is the dream of a world which is in some respects like the Christian dream of the Kingdom of God, at least in its social emphasis. And though he is undoubtedly unfair to Christianity, Day Lewis would say—yes, like the dream of Christians; but Christians don't do anything about it. They have had their chance. We want action.

Stephen Spender, the youngest of this British trio, is an avowed Communist—not, however, a Russian Communist—as he hates dictatorship or tyranny of any kind. No more bitter denunciation of the Church can be found than in the writings of these three greatest of England's poets. This portion of a poem by Spender describes an airplane's view of a city, as the plane glides into the airport. Note the harsh criticism of the Church's social failure at the end:

"Beyond the winking masthead light  
 And the landing-ground, they observe the outposts  
 Of work: chimneys like lank black fingers  
 Or figures frightening and mad: and squat buildings  
 With their strange air behind trees, like women's faces  
 Shattered by grief. Here where few houses  
 Moan with faint light behind their blinds  
 They remark the unhomely sense of complaint, like a dog  
 Shut out and shivering at the foreign moon.

"Then, as they land, they hear the tolling bell  
 Reaching across the landscape of hysteria  
 To where, larger than all the charcoaled batteries  
 And imaged towers against that dying sky,  
 Religion stands, the church blocking the sun."<sup>14</sup>

England's three most influential poets are concerned then with the establishment of a new social order, and with regard to its possibility they are optimists, but the Church and religion have no part in it for them.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>14</sup> *Poems*, 1935, Random House, New York. p. 55.

We turn now to three great Americans—Edna St. Vincent Millay, Robinson Jeffers and Robert Frost. In not one of these shall we find the intense passion for social justice of Auden, Lewis and Spender. Neither will we find the deep religious hunger and belief of Eliot. In Jeffers and Millay we shall find the same disgust with much of present living, but we shall miss the hope for a better future which is ever apparent in the three English poets.

In 1912 there appeared in an anthology "The Lyric Year," a poem by a nineteen-year-old girl, Edna St. Vincent Millay, called "Renascence." A remarkable poem, it was immediately recognized as such by the critics of the day. It seemed also to herald the coming of a poet of rare spiritual insight. Who can number the multitudes of sermons in which have been quoted these words?

"The world stands out on either side  
No wider than the heart is wide;  
Above the world is stretched the sky—  
No higher than the soul is high.  
The heart can push the sea and land  
Farther away on either hand;  
The soul can split the sky in two,  
And let the face of God shine through."<sup>15</sup>

But the religiously hopeful were doomed to utter disappointment. The spiritual promise of "Renascence" was not to be realized again in the work of Edna St. Vincent Millay.

In her third book of poetry called "Second April" this poet began the definite development of that subject which has become for her an obsession, namely, that life, so beautiful and remarkable, issues finally only in death which is the extinction of all its achieved values. The first poem of the book entitled "Spring" is fairly descriptive of her thought—

"To what purpose, April, do you return again?  
Beauty is not enough.  
You can no longer quiet me with the redness  
Of little leaves opening stickily.  
I know what I know.  
The sun is hot on my neck as I observe  
The spikes of the crocus.  
The smell of the earth is good.  
It is apparent that there is no death.  
But what does that signify?"

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<sup>15</sup> From "Renascence," p. 14. Copyright, 1917, by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt.

Not only underground are the brains of men  
 Eaten by maggots.  
 Life in itself  
 Is nothing,  
 An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.  
 It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,  
 April  
 Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers."<sup>16</sup>

So Edna St. Vincent Millay becomes the poet of rebellion—rebellion against death—against life, God, the Church, and religion.

We shall not, however, dismiss her from our thought with this word alone. Though such a theme is not for many a pleasant one, yet credit is due to a great poet, who instead of ignoring the most significant fact in the human scene about us, dares to face it, even if she faces it solely on the human level. Doctors, ministers, and even poets have maintained an air of silence about death too often. An unbeliever dares to consider it with a careful and often horrid contemplation of all its unlovely details, and she is not always easy upon Christians who do not brave it sincerely. Concerning the grief of Christians who thus belie what they profess she sarcastically writes:

Grief that is grief and worthy of that word  
 Is ours alone for whom no hope can be  
 That the loved eyes look down and understand.  
 Ye true believers, trusters in the Lord,  
 Today bereft, tomorrow hand in hand,  
 Think ye not shame to show your tears to me."<sup>17</sup>

Miss Millay no longer believes in a purpose in life either for the universe or individuals. The earth and its inhabitants are creatures of impulse. Life is movement, directed nowhere in particular. It is thirst and hunger for something, but never resulting in any true satisfaction. Only the movement is interesting, and the end of it all is death, destruction, chaos, futility. Though she sees no thread of purpose, she does declare that she will work for the overthrow of wrong and the triumph of right alongside of those who believe they are working to achieve lasting results.

And strangely enough she honors Jesus Christ as the fairest and best of earth's great souls. Though she gives Him highest place, she sees very few who follow Him among all those who profess to do so. Most of those

<sup>16</sup> From "Second April," p. 1. Copyright, 1920, by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt.

<sup>17</sup> From "Huntsman, What Quarry?" p. 88. Copyright, 1939, by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt.

she knows or sees are but using His name as a cloak for their selfishness. The sonnet, "To Jesus on His Birthday," may be taken as typical:

For this your mother sweated in the cold,  
 For this you bled upon the bitter tree:  
 A yard of tinsel ribbon bought and sold;  
 A paper wreath; a day at home for me.  
 The merry bells ring out, the people kneel;  
 Up goes the man of God before the crowd;  
 With voice of honey and with eyes of steel  
 He drones your humble gospel to the proud.  
 Nobody listens. Less than the wind that blows  
 Are all your words to us you died to save.  
 O Prince of Peace! O Sharon's dewy Rose!  
 How mute you lie within your vaulted grave.  
 The stone the angel rolled away with tears  
 Is back upon your mouth these thousand years.<sup>18</sup>

How bitter an attitude toward Christians and Christmas! How pessimistic a viewpoint concerning the result of the life and thought of the noblest of all men! And yet—it hurts most—because, although the picture is overdrawn, there is too much truth in that piece of poetry to allow us to sit back comfortably as we reject it.

If you think Edna St. Vincent Millay is rebellious, is cynical, is pessimistic, take a look at Robinson Jeffers, the son of a theologian, who has become the poet of hopelessness. For him

"Humanity is the mould to break away from."<sup>19</sup>

For him, God is a wild being, a greater Caesar or Napoleon. He doesn't deny the fact of God but he belittles Him and distorts Him. One must flee from God and from man also. Neither is worthy of much attention. There is no purpose in the universe, no progress, only endless suffering and futility.

Jeffers is the best storyteller of all the modern poets, but his stories are filled with incest and adultery and horrid things which revolt the stomach and the mind. There is a rugged strength in much of his poetry, however, which challenges the reading of it. He knows how to give us the feel of great rocks and waves along the ocean edge, of crags and boulders and mountains, and other magnificent spectacles of nature's art. Indeed, the final good to Jeffers is the understanding of the basic inanimate physical

<sup>18</sup> From *Buck in the Snow*, p. 67. Copyright, 1927, by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt.

<sup>19</sup> *The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers*, 1937, Random House, New York. p. 149.

foundations of the earth. A great stone, unmovable and permanent, is more to him than human beings and their wishes and hopes. Stones satisfy. People irritate.

Jeffers often has an apt verse which can help to color a sermon. Perhaps there may be some good excuse for making sermons out of the stones that Jeffers throws at us. Let us illustrate:

". . . corruption  
Never has been compulsory, when the cities lie at the  
monster's feet there are left the mountains." <sup>20</sup>

Here is a portion of a poem that has a profound insight into certain tragic tendencies in our modern world,

"Listen: power is a great hollow spirit  
That needs a center.  
It chooses one man almost at random  
And clouds him and clots around him and it possesses him.  
Listen: the man does not have power,  
Power has the man." <sup>21</sup>

But this may be richer sermon material—

"Clearly it is time  
To become disillusioned, each person to enter his own soul's desert  
And look for God—having seen man." <sup>22</sup>

This paper necessarily had to deal with poets of doubt and rebellion and cynicism, but, that it might have a certain degree of serenity in it, we began with a Christian poet and we shall place a great mystical poet, Robert Frost, at the end of the group. In one of his lectures Mr. Frost said, "I don't want to be bothered by a poem, I want to be thrilled." Auden and Eliot, Lewis, Spender, Jeffers and Millay bother us much of the time. Perhaps we should be bothered 6/7 of the time and by 6/7 of the poets. But Robert Frost, quiet, gentle, able poet of New England, will thrill us with the beauty and glow of just living.

Not that Frost is an orthodox believer in Christianity. He is not. Few poets have been completely orthodox. Robert Frost's religion is the religion of love. Love is for him the positive force in life, while reason is the negative. He said once, "All my poems are love poems." "A Prayer in Spring," perhaps best of all his poetry, expresses his simple religious faith. The first and last verses are:

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 168.

<sup>21</sup> *Be Angry at the Sun*, Random House, New York, 1941. p. 70.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 105.

"Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers today;  
And give us not to think so far away  
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here  
All simply in the springing of the year.

"For this is love and nothing else is love,  
The which it is reserved for God above  
To sanctify to what far ends He will.  
But which it only needs that we fulfill." <sup>23</sup>

Lawrance Thompson in his book, *Fire and Ice, the Art and Thought of Robert Frost*, which is an excellent guide to the understanding of the poet, tells us that if religion can be defined as "the simple feeling of a relationship of dependence upon something above us and a desire to establish relations with this mysterious power," then Robert Frost has a deep religious belief.<sup>24</sup>

But a certain natural skepticism hinders the poet from supposing that he can discover the mysteries of the Divine One. Not being able to see God, he would say there is no way of knowing Him. If we crave to probe into the mysteries of the universe, then the place to start is with the mystery of human experience which we can see about us. Let us start there rather than in those hidden realms which are beyond our vision.

It may be said that Robert Frost believes that the secrets of this universe, the answers to its problems, the light which may come from its Creator, is to be found, not in the contemplation of the whole, but in the careful scrutiny of the little common things about us—the minutiae of existence. He is the poet of the commonplace, not the extraordinary; the poet of the woodpile and not the palace; the poet of New England and not the world. This is the reason for his writing—

Some may know what they seek in school and church,  
And why they seek it there; for what I search  
I must go measuring stone walls, perch on perch.<sup>25</sup>

Though we may see much more in church and our heritage of religious faith than he does, yet we may also find help in the direction of understanding the simple ways of life, the careful measuring of stone walls, toward which and through which Robert Frost leads us in his poetry.

Frost is a realist, but never such a one as Jeffers who takes us through all the details of the slush of life. Robert Frost believes that there are

<sup>23</sup> *Collected Poems*, 1942. p. 17. Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

<sup>24</sup> p. 187.

<sup>25</sup> *Collected Poems*, 1942. p. 214. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.



two kinds of realists: the one who offers a great deal of dirt with his potato to show you that it is a real one, and the one who is satisfied with the potato—brushed clean. He affirms that he is the second kind. Certainly it is true as one has said of him, "His ethical firmness partakes of the nature of the hills." There is something in his poetry, although it covers all of life, sinful as well as good, that makes you a better person for having read it.

Frost likes the incident in *Pilgrim's Progress* where Pilgrim is asked by Evangelist, "Do you see yonder shining light?" and he answers, "I think I do." And all the rest of the story, to our poet, is the story of Pilgrim's being willing to act on the supposition that he thought he saw the light. Robert Frost is never dogmatic, never completely sure, when it comes to the many beliefs of life and religion. He will not describe God or define Him. He will not be definite about life beyond the grave. But he will build his life upon the basis of a hope in an unseen reality beyond earth and in a life beyond the ranges of this present world. There is a tone of immortality sounding through the body of his thinking.

To Frost, life is a thing of beauty—all of it. He studies it in every one of its phases. Like Shakespeare, he is interested in the most common people and the most common things. And he sees in all of life a pattern, a design and a purpose.

Frost is a master dramatist and he dramatizes beautifully and realistically the little incidents of life which come under his observation. He is a wizard with words, manipulating them with rare skill. He is a philosopher—one might stretch a point and say he is in some sense a theologian, lifting simple events and thoughts up to the levels of cosmic importance and significance. But unlike many philosophers and theologians he does not use his materials to defend his thesis, nor his illustrations to persuade people to adopt certain theories. He merely illustrates and in subtle ways suggests avenues of thought along which his readers may travel if they wish.

Let us suggest the following poems as evidence of his genius directed into realms closely, if not directly, related to religion: "Tree at My Window," "The Road Not Taken," "A Time to Talk," "Into My Own," "Misgiving."

The lines which probably explain best the attitude of Robert Frost's life are the last four lines of "The Lesson for Today" from his latest book, *The Witness Tree*:

"And were an epitaph to be my story  
I'd have a short one ready for my own.

I would have written of me on my stone:  
I had a lover's quarrel with the world."<sup>22</sup>

That is Frost's attitude. He is not completely satisfied. He quarrels with much of life. I could imagine him quarreling with God over the way things are run. But it is always a "lover's quarrel." All of life and the whole world are tied securely to him in a love relationship. He loves God, or at least we may say he would love God if he could see Him. Edna St. Vincent Millay has a quarrel with the world and she is rather bitter about it; Robinson Jeffers has a quarrel with the world and with whatever God there may be—a quarrel without end. But Robert Frost has a lover's quarrel with the world and with God. There is all the difference in the universe between a quarrel and a lover's quarrel.

Each of these poets has a real contribution for the life and thinking of anyone wishing to know their age and its thought as an aid in interpreting all the ages.

Three of our poets—Auden, Spender and Lewis—have a great social passion. These three, strangely enough, are among the least religious. One only, T. S. Eliot, is definitely Christian. Two—Jeffers and Millay—see no hope of progress or possibility of lasting reform in the world, and two others—Eliot and Frost—believe that the world ever continues to be essentially static as far as morals and character and conditions which make for good or bad living are concerned. These last are the only two who profess some kind of religion that is vital and certain. To Eliot religion is a matter of the individual being lifted by supernatural power out of the wastelands of ordinary life. To Frost religion is the individual choosing the right medium position between two forces, love and reason.

A question that forces itself upon us as we conclude our study is, Why are the majority of modern poets not in the ranks of Christianity? Are we so busy with the organizational part of church life that we neglect our intellectual growth? We must guard against such a calamity lest we lay ourselves open to the criticism that while our lives are rich in emotional value through religion, we lack the intellectual depth to express ourselves as finished craftsmen.

<sup>22</sup> *Collected Poems*, 1942. p. 52. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is one of the four prize papers selected in the 1942-43 contest. "Religious Values in Modern Poetry" was originally read by Mr. Wilson before the Methodist Ministers' Association of the Buffalo District.

Other prize papers appear in our pages this year.

# The American in Today's Mirrors

RALPH W. SOCKMAN

SINCE World War I, nations have been studying themselves to discover their unique qualities. Twenty-five years ago Russia threw off the layers of foreign importations and sought a revival of her native strength. Weary of taking their aristocratic patterns from Prussia and their literary modes from France, the Russians went back to their inherent sources of power. And under a banner bearing the hammer, symbol of the artisan, and the sickle, symbol of the peasant, Russia has demonstrated an industrial and military energy which has amazed the world.

Postwar Italy, after flirting briefly with democracy, tried to dig up the glory that was Caesar's. And under the pompous and prating Mussolini flaunted an Augustan glory, brief but vigorous. Germany, rising from the ruins of defeat, was led by the fanatical Hitler to assert her claim to unique supremacy through the blood stream of a superior Nordic race. Japan, clever copyists of Western culture and mechanics, said: "Why should we continue to render obeisance to all things foreign, when we have something no other nation possesses? We have an emperor descended from the Sun-goddess."

Thus the spirit of nationalism was galvanized into energetic promotion throughout the great countries of the earth. And America shared in the revival. What volumes have been written on various phases of "The American way"! This reappraisal of ourselves is valuable, provided it is done honestly, sanely and humbly.

The current season has produced several books which hold the mirror up, not so much to America as to Americans. James Truslow Adams, one of our most authentic interpreters, in *The American* essays to analyze the factors which have produced this "new man" whom we call the American. He asserts that there is a distinctiveness which marks the American off from other nationalities. It is not another history of the United States, not a book about what people have done in or to America, but rather about what America has done to the people who came here.

Those who came to our shores have been a picked lot, to be sure. Despite some riffraff, they have in general been those who had the energy and ambition to get away from oppression and poverty. But the creative

factors which have been most creative in shaping American culture have not been the ideas or qualities brought to our shores. The most formative factors have been things found here. Perhaps first among these determining elements was land. Land was the strongest magnet to draw the poor of the old world to our shores. "Land, land, land. It throbs through the American symphony like the brass chords in Beethoven. Land—a little home lot in a village, a farm, a clearing in the woods—land in fantastically growing cities with colossal unearned increments—land with surprising things under it—coal, copper, silver, gold, oil—land, cheap or free, and like Aladdin's lamp needing only to be used to bring about personal independence or perhaps the most amazing riches. Land became an obsession for Americans, generation after generation."

This lure of the land brought with it the factor of the frontier. The opportunity to go West and grow up with the country divided our population into "goers" and "stayers." Adams admits that it often required a finer form of courage to stay by the stuff in the East. But the frontier bred a spirit of freedom and resourcefulness. It helped to unite the colonies during the Revolutionary War when the seaboard residents were pathetically divided. The frontier also created that loneliness which was so poignant an experience for the wives of the pioneers, but which bred the spirit of hospitality, so marked as a feature of American life especially in the West.

Other factors which shaped the American were the three thousand miles of ocean which cut him off from the Old World, thus accentuating his spirit of independence, even of isolation; the lack of class barriers which caused every American to feel that he can look every other man in the eye on the level; the openness of opportunity which enabled a Carnegie and a Ford to rise. And most of all, the American dream has kept this the land of hope.

Adams' favorite theme in this American dream of a land where life shall be richer and fuller with opportunity for every person according to his ability and achievement. He writes as an individualist, ever solicitous to preserve the spirit of free enterprise, but he does not use this concept to conceal, as so many do, the desire of unlimited privilege for the few. He has faith in the common people. "The great mistakes in our government," he writes, quoting Edward Everett Hale, "have all been the mistakes of theorists. The great successes have been wrought when the people took their own affair in hand and pushed it through."

His treatment of religion as a factor in shaping the American is scarcely adequate. Yet he admits its profound influence both on our political philosophy and our social progress. He is a bit hard on the Puritanism of New England. "Had Puritan Massachusetts been permeated with the teachings of Christ instead of with those of Moses and the prophets, its whole history would have been different." The Pilgrim Fathers, however, deserve the pedestal on which they have been placed, because they risked all for the sake of a dream.

Adams carries his book down only until the end of the nineteenth century. Certainly some events since 1900 have put more finishing touches on this new creation called the American. But then the American is not finished.

In *Winter Wheat*, Mildred Walker depicts one small segment in the continental process of making an American. Amid the drab conditions of a Montana farm she shows the drama of lives which depend on the soil—the soil of this land which has lured the American dreamers. "The pioneers who came West in the seventies in search of gold were no greater gamblers than the prosaic-looking ranchers planting wheat on the dry-land farms. They gamble with the weather that it will be neither too dry, nor too hot, nor too wet, nor too cold; that the wheat will not be destroyed by hail or grasshoppers; and when at last they have the ripe wheat cut and stored they gamble with the market that wheat will be selling for enough money to pay for all the summer's work."

The book is written in the first person as by one Ellen Webb, the daughter of a Vermont father and a Russian mother, the latter brought to this country after a courtship during World War I. The Russian peasant girl did not fit into the conservative dignity of New England. The father, who had planned to be a teacher, transferred his career and transplanted his wife to a Montana farm. But the wide open spaces of the West were not roomy enough to remove all the friction from this union. Ellen, the daughter, grows up in an atmosphere of cultural tension.

This conflict of cultures is accentuated by Ellen's college experience. She falls in love with Gilbert Hinsley Borden, son of a history professor. When Gil visits his prospective bride on her Montana farm, the seeds of apprehension are sown in his mind. His love is too fragile a plant to grow on the soil amid the winter wheat. Ellen's dream is shattered and she returns to overcome her heartache by immersion in the toil of the farm. Now she sees life in her bleak homestead through Gil's eyes. She sees

the stolid placidity of her hard-working mother, the waspishness and shallowness of her father, the tawdry unpainted shack with its curtainless windows. She hates the vastness, the solitude, the seeming waste of life.

Crops fail. She takes a teaching position in a dull neighboring community. The father of one of her pupils arouses her interest but cannot fill the void left by Gil. But through her aching eyes she begins to see the meaning of fortitude. She learns that romantic love must give place to something deeper, more meaningful and more lasting. The death of Gil in a bomber crash ploughs deeply into her emotions but it breaks the hard soil; and as the book ends the reader begins to feel that love, as hardy as winter wheat, is taking root under the soil of her life and a harvest is in prospect.

Mildred Walker possesses the power of conveying emotion. She writes with a directness which makes the reader feel the embarrassment, the hate, the possessiveness, the animal stolidity of the mother. She reveals the father's frustration and Ellen's sense of hopelessness. Her characters live. She so carries us into the valley of her shadows that we find a singular happiness when the light of understanding begins to break and Ellen discovers that her parents "had love that was deep-rooted and stronger than love that grows easy. It gave me faith for my own life . . . I had not always been glad that I was their child, but today I had a kind of pride in being born to them."

The American has imported materials which have gone into the making of his way of life. One of these is rubber. And Vicki Baum has given us the story of rubber in a jig-saw puzzle composed of many pieces of discovery, slave labor, torture, peril, disease, sacrifice. The title of her novel—which embodies sufficient research to merit, as she says, "a modest Ph.D degree"—is *The Weeping Wood*.

"The Indians called the stuff when they first discovered it the Weeping Wood. It has been weeping ever since, and so have the people who have had to do with it. Read about rubber and every page is an accusation, and it sums up into the word: Profit. Rubber has always been an invitation to make easy profits at the expense of others; rubber breeds crime, it breeds wars. . . . But we'll bring it back to the Western Hemisphere, and with the help of modern machinery and transportation the Weeping Wood won't weep any more; we're going to make it sing on wheels. . . ."

Filled as this novel is with the lore of rubber, it weaves its facts into the lives of people and of nations with all the power of drama and suspense.



It begins two hundred years ago in Brazil with the story of a Jesuit missionary who brought rubber to the attention of civilization through his efforts to win the Amazon Indians to Christianity. Those Indians were then using latex for the making of simple toys.

World-wide in scope, this sweeping epic embraces Java and Sumatra in the East, where seedlings were brought some seventy years ago. It takes in England, whose initiative smuggled out of Brazil a shipment of delicate seeds, tended them in Kew Gardens, and shipped them to Ceylon. The story moves on to Germany, with its development of, and dependence on, synthetic Buna rubber. But it is Akron, Ohio, which becomes the rubber capital of the modern industrial world. Goodyear's discoveries in the "curing" of rubber marked a new epoch.

Vicki Baum is a realist. She writes with a frankness which makes some more delicate natures shudder. The full details of the licentious and the sensual, the lust in every chapter, whether true or not, are so vivid that a sensitive reader asks, "Why?" From a literary standpoint, however, the book is well written.

The threads of the world-embracing drama are pulled together at last in an imaginary meeting in New York, where the dreams of rubber's future are unfolded. Listening to the Americans as they expound their dreams, Doctor Hernried, the German scientist, is moved to remark: "These Americans! How immature they are—with their easy idealism and their untried, unfounded optimism—and yet, how lovable! They really believe in a better world—just because they are so naïve. They refuse to face or accept things as they are but see them only as they want them to be. Maybe this is stupidity; maybe it is greatness."

The American has not only imported materials which have gone into the shaping of himself, but he has exported his materials and culture which have contributed to forming an image of him abroad. Pearl Buck, whose service in interpreting the East and West to each other, has justly won the highest literary recognition, has turned her pen to portray the impressions of America now held in war-torn China. Through the eyes of Mayli, a Chinese girl educated in America, the author surveys the Chinese scene, lighted by the hopes, and shadowed by the disappointments, from America. Her book is called *The Promise*.

The very title itself involves a distortion of history; though, in this case, it may be unpremeditated. What is *The Promise*? By whom and to whom was it made? A careful reader will find, on the very last page,

the author's answer. For China, there is promise in her own courage. But the unwary reader tends to feel, throughout the book, that America had been remiss in redeeming some undefined "promise" to China.

That feeling, to be sure, may come from a natural smart of self-blame for official blindness to our unity of interest with China, throughout her tragic martyrdom before Pearl Harbor. Even so, it takes on a sense of positive bad faith; derived mostly, it seems to me, from the implications raised by her title.

More serious, because reflecting on a friendly allied nation, are the fictional events described as taking place during the Japanese invasion of Burma. For example, there is the story that laborers were locked in at the docks of Rangoon, by the British, during the Japanese air attacks on those docks. To invent such an "incident" out of whole cloth required premeditation. The author must have known that it tends to turn mere military ineptness into the appearance of utterly callous brutality.

Again, her exciting story of an imaginary military operation in Burma, involving Chinese and British forces, is marred because the Chinese forces suffer imaginary annihilation on account of the cowardly and self-centered behavior of a British force the Chinese troops were rescuing from a Japanese trap. According to Pearl Buck's vivid word-picture of this *event that never happened*, the British were enabled to escape across a bridge because the Chinese surprised the Japanese at the bridge end and drove them temporarily back. Having crossed, the British then destroyed the bridge immediately, leaving their allies on the other side where more powerful Japanese forces destroyed them. Such is the poison with which this book is tainted.

Not all the author's recklessness in dealing with matters of history is directed against the British; though toward them she has dipped her pen in venom. One of her characters describes, with great gusto, the conflicts of purpose alleged to exist between Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. The Madam, it was said, insisted on attending military councils, where the Generalissimo did not want her. He accordingly is described as having had her excluded at the point of a soldier's bayonet!

There is a generally accepted code of literary integrity, in dealing with historical events and personages; but in your reviewer's opinion this book ignores the code. Merely as a precaution, the military "incidents" mentioned above have been checked according to the record, and no trace whatever of them was found. This book is unsuited to readers who like their entertainment to be reasonably free from hidden virus.

That Pearl Buck has written a stirring story of wartime China few will deny. That she may be reasonably accurate in portraying the disillusionment which came to Chinese minds, because of Pearl Harbor and the loss of Burma, appears quite possible. That her book nevertheless contains fictional incidents, which distort history and improperly discredit our British allies and friends, seems unquestionable.

And now the current season has produced a book about one who lived here throughout most of his life without ever becoming American in spirit. George Santayana in *Persons and Places* gives the background of his life, filled with scintillating flashes from Europe and the Orient, yet centering like the spokes of a wheel in Boston as the hub.

The author's mother, a Spanish woman born in Glasgow, was stranded at twenty, after the death of her father, on a small island in the Philippines; was married in Manila to George Sturgis, of a great Boston merchant family of that day; was soon widowed in Boston with four children; went back to Spain for a visit; and there married the author's father—only to leave him, with all her children, and make her home again in Boston among the Sturgis clan, with whom she had permanently cast her lot.

The first fifty-seven pages of this book are given over to descriptions of parents and grandparents in the era prior to his own birth. Especial attention was given to a father whose qualities could have had little significance save only through the parental genes that affect character.

Kind and civilized Bostonians won both affection and confidence; "but beneath and in the end there was a chasm. It was only with friends . . . who at bottom had the same religion and philosophy with ourselves that this chasm could be bridged."

Santayana was no religious devotee. Toward the Catholic Church of his fathers he was respectful and even affectionate; but he terms it "paganism spiritually transformed and made metaphysical . . . (with) . . . just the needed dose of wisdom, sublimity and illusion." Protestantism, on the other hand, he brackets with liberalism, positivism and Judaism in its ultimate purpose or end. "It is prosperity, or as Lutheran theologians put it, union with God at our level, not at God's level."

He makes use of Bacon's essay, "New Atlantis," to express his judgment of American and English civilization. "Bacon," he says, "was the prophet of the rich man's Utopia; he had the liberal's worship of prosperity, and the pragmatic esteem for science and dominion over matter as means to that end. . . . But Bacon had another side, the rich man's delight in

nobility and splendor . . . with a magnificent pageant of virtues and dignities, like celestial choirs come down to earth." These, he said, often hid the mechanism which produced the supporting prosperity of these nations; then continued, "It was precisely this free, friendly, laughing side of Anglo-Saxon civilization that I liked and cultivated."

Perhaps it was because he was a Spaniard *pur sang*, and as such loved with abandon his native soil that Avila is treated with far greater affection, hence understanding, than any other place unless it be Harvard Yard. His spirit seemed to be at home in Spain, while in Boston he felt closed within himself. Of himself he said he never was adventurous. It made him almost a recluse, yet he had a liking for Americans. Concerning his leaning toward a solitary life, he says "Nature had framed me for a recluse."

He certainly writes well. There is an artistry in his entire work that cannot fail to make any Santayana work an event. It is practically poetic prose.

His excellent sense of humor is ever manifest. Here are a few examples: "The Canonical age of reason when one begins to sin of one's own accord"; his description of Boston as "a moral and intellectual nursery, always busy applying first principles to trifles"; in speaking of a man and woman in the Sturgis family, who had been converted into Catholicism and died a short time later within a few days of each other, he says, "They put off pledging themselves about the other world until they were about to enter it, and discover whether they were right or wrong."

Like a minor melody running through this brilliant book is the spirit of uncomplaining endurance which he admires more than the cult of improvement. Perhaps the basic pattern of Santayana's philosophy antedates even the ancestors whom he describes. He is at heart a Spaniard, and for six hundred years Spain was ruled by the Koran and Crescent.

**The American.** By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943. pp. 385. \$3.00.

**Winter Wheat.** By MILDRED WALKER. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1944. pp. 306. \$2.50.

**The Weeping Wood.** By VICKI BAUM. New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1943. pp. 531. \$3.00.

**The Promise.** By PEARL S. BUCK. New York: The John Day Company, 1943. pp. 248. \$2.50.

**Persons and Places.** By GEORGE SANTAYANA. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944. pp. 254. \$2.50.

## Book Reviews

**Wonderings.** By JOHN MASEFIELD. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943. pp. 63. \$1.75.

Like puppies barking at the pyramids, the youngest critics are always the first to yawp that the laureateship is only a wreath for the dead. They cite Wordsworth and Tennyson, of course, as wilted exhibits of "the bloomin' lyre" nipped by a late frost: cold cash and a ribbon of merit across its muted strings. These effectually cooled its Aprilic ardors and silenced its master's brave music.

Now as always when a champion risks his title by publishing a provocative book, there will be many penny-challengers to say that *Wonderings* signs and seals the ancient libel on the laureateship. They will quote banal couplets and lame lines from what they will probably call "Masefield's Maunderings" and will have an incredibly easy time piling up points against the old master. All of this in the earlier rounds when they are still judging Masefield as he, in his young rashness, judged the town where he was born. "Slowly I came to know it," he said, "but at first judged of it only by its best and worst." Their "best" is likely to be taken from Masefield's earlier works; their "worst" from *Wonderings*. The laureate is thus made to shadow-box with himself rather than to slug it out, as only Masefield can, exquisitely. Even so, in the later rounds, the champion flashes his oldtime form and power. Lines, quatrains, pages explode in the challenger's face or over his young, but less-enduring heart. He literally "sees stars and hears canaries sing" the far sweet music of the spheres. For that is the cosmic surge and thrust that Masefield packs into the last power-radiant pages of *Wonderings*:

"Something from someone who has heard  
The new cry of the spirit-bird;  
Word that denies that man is meat  
For hell-begotten war to eat  
But cries that man is of the stars  
Beauty of light, power of heat."

The reverend doctors will cavil at these pugilistic metaphors about poetry in a journal of religion; but not John Masefield; having spiritualized sport in "Right Royal" and "Reynard the Fox," he will understand and approve; he may even remind the pedants that Saint Paul himself, when he wrote for stout-hearted men about to become martyrs, used the speech and imagery of the prize-ring and the stadium: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished *the* course, I have kept the faith."

Come to think of it, that is exactly what Masefield says in *Wonderings* to a new generation of men offering "their bodies a living sacrifice" under the protesting stars. Like them he has known from earliest boyhood the spell of the soil and the sea. He, too, has learned that

"... the joy of living  
Is not in having for oneself but giving  
For life is emptiness and Nature bare  
Lacking the friend to have the larger share."

These friends were for Masfield successively, "an old goat-toothed Briton, lank and gaunt" who was

"Tender as woman to a thing in pain,  
Moved by affection ever more than gain,  
Dumb, incoherent, with a startled cry  
At beauty of earth or colour in the sky";

a carpenter, a Master-Craftsman,

"Who built the churches in the long ago,  
And will again when greed and folly go";

and, after them, a nurse,

"Her very life a gift or offered loan  
To all whose need was greater than her own.  
Her rule the Scriptures, out of which she spelled  
Counsel and comfort on the course she held."

Even the sinister bargemen lifted horizons for him in

". . . empty alleys with none stirring  
Save possibly a black cat purring.  
For who could doubt those swarthy men  
Knew Tenedos and Darien."

Even the youngest critic must admit that this is the old Masfield of "Sea-Fever," "Cargoes," and "Gallipoli."

Gallipoli! The very word tolls like a bell. And for whom? For Masfield and all

"Those upright English poor, those hearts of gold,  
Who, through the hardship between birth and dying  
Held a true course and kept their colours flying.  
Not shipping, cotton, iron, wools, and coals  
Can make a nation's wealth, but splendid souls."

This is just as obviously the new Masfield rising phoenix-like from the ashes of disillusionment and the devastation of two World Wars, proud of the England that was and foreseeing the England still to be:

"Something more green with bud and leaf,  
With healing for the hour of grief,  
With outlet for the hour of glory  
And brotherhood for a belief."

This is the brave new dawn for which Masfield believes the cocks are already crowing. This is the pyramid which a "dead" laureate has reared in the desert to lift men's eyes from sea and sand to the stars. Verily Masfield, even as Paul, has "kept the faith."

EARL BOWMAN MARLATT

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts



**While America Slept.** By D. F. FLEMING. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1944. pp. 269 (Cloth) \$2.00; pp. 87 (Paper) \$1.00.

Events of tremendous significance crowd so rapidly upon each other these tragic days that probably many of us know better the history of past eras than that of the period through which we are now living. Still less do many of us really understand the import of current events. Among the comparatively few people fully aware of the world in which he lives and able to assess the value of each day's happenings is D. F. Fleming of Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

Fortunately this man's awareness and comprehension were of value not only to his students and his immediate circle but to a wide audience of radio listeners who heard him each week over radio station WSM. Now, still more fortunately, a collection of his radio addresses broadcast during the critical months from May 22, 1940, through December 10, 1941, is made available to the public under the significant title *While America Slept*.

The reading of this little volume is a stirring experience which one wishes could be shared by all Americans. There are at least four points which Doctor Fleming hammers home through all these broadcasts with all the power at his command—and that power is considerable. These four points are the nature of fascism and its basic and unrelenting conflict with the principles of peace and freedom; the fact that in such a conflict no man or nation can be neutral; the vital importance of Britain as a key point in our own defense; and the insane folly of the United States in rejecting the League of Nations and thus negating all the sacrifices of the first World War.

Doctor Fleming's prophecies are accurate and his judgments right. On June 25, 1941, he said: "When Hitler sought to take control of the world by machines, he started something that we shall finish—if we can keep Britain fighting strongly until winter comes—for we have the power not only to keep control of the seas but to take control of the air, a combination which means the disintegration of the Hitler empire."

He faced squarely any possible doubts in this country on the point of fighting side by side with Russia and said on July 2, 1941: "The attack on Russia has opened up the first real hope of defeating the aggressors fairly soon."

Months before Pearl Harbor, Doctor Fleming declared that Japan was about to take the final plunge and advocated unrelenting pressure on Japan and no compromise with her militarists. All this from the standpoint of our own interests. "We need a strong free China," he declared.

Perhaps the keynote of all Doctor Fleming's line of thought may be found in the broadcast of September 24, 1941, when he said: "No nation, however big and theoretically isolated, can be safe unless the smallest of the nations is safe. On a planet which perpetually shrinks for purposes of war, not even the richest and most comfort-loving nation can be safe unless everybody else is safe. In other words, no nation, not even the biggest, can live in peace and security hereafter unless there is enough world government really to prevent world wars from starting. That is a law the operation of which no nation can escape."

As we approached Pearl Harbor, he said on December 3, 1941: "It is vital to remember always that this is one war, not two. All three (Germany, Italy, and Japan) of them are engaged in a total war of looting and conquest, one openly

designed to end in their control of the earth. . . . If we should set out to make peace for less than a century this time, we would deserve the destruction that would be in store for us. We have reached the point in human history where civilized nations cannot continue to exist without strong, effective world government."

On December 10, after Pearl Harbor, under the title "The War Comes to Us," Doctor Fleming analyzes our situation and in a striking tribute to President Roosevelt, he sets forth the steps, beginning with the "quarantine speech" in October, 1937, by which the President strove to warn our people and to prepare us for the approaching storm. Referring once more to Woodrow Wilson, "the first world statesman," and the "colossal mistake" we made in 1920, Doctor Fleming warns us this time to defend "whatever temple of peace" may result from this war.

May we take these words to heart.

CLARK M. EICHELBERGER

Director of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace.

**Liberal Education Re-examined.** By THEODORE M. GREENE. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. pp. xi-134. \$2.00.

If there were no other merit, two unescapable facts arrest attention. First the book's title, *Liberal Education Re-examined*. The very nature of liberal education and the world in which it struggles makes such a study necessary at frequent intervals. Then the personnel of the committee—Theodore M. Greene, Charles C. Fries, Henry M. Wriston, William Dighton. These names give assurance in advance. Each member of the committee "holds himself specifically responsible for what he has written."

In Chapter One, "Education in America Today," President Wriston sets forth the "Contemporary Scene in Perspective," as the necessary starting point. Attention is called to the superficial view and manner of life in contrast to the abiding factors in Liberal Education, which lays hold on eternal truth and basic principles. In contrast "General" education is "a spiritually neutral word, devoid of any implications of insight, perception, values."

The committee proceeds on the assumption that there is "a good life" and a way to achieve it. Having set this forth as possible, and best lived in a democracy, the next step is to make the case for Liberal Education as the necessary qualification for and safeguard of such a life. As among the Romans, only freemen were permitted to pursue the higher or liberal arts, almost conversely we may deduce from this "Report," that only those who pursue liberal education, and that, only to the degree of their mastery in this field, can men become and remain free. The superior rank of Liberal Education is well set forth in the thesis of the study. "It was our contention that a liberal education is not only uniquely qualified to prepare man for the good life, but that it is the only effective preparation for responsible citizenship and, at the same time, the necessary basis for, and complement to, vocational and professional training." Democracy cannot rise above the intellectual and educational level of its members.

Chapter, titles and subtitles—such as "Three Major Premises of Democracy"—demand consideration. Read once, to catch the sense of inclusiveness—*multum in parvo!* Read again, even between the lines, for basic principles under-

lying the whole. This "Report" literally makes the *thoughtful* reader think. What would one expect to find under the caption "The Good Life, Democracy, and Liberal Education"?

"The Content of a Liberal Education" (Chapter 4), is an illustration of inclusiveness. Primary and secondary functions are clearly stated and the logic for various mooted subjects, as part of the curriculum of Liberal Education, gives them a place. The treatment of Chapter 5, "Education at the Various Academic Levels," is equally skillful. "In the schools the most important element for the pupil is the teacher," calls for something to the point on "The Preparation of Teachers." With no uncertain note it follows. "Faith in machinery is our besetting sin. . . . We constantly seek some magic short cut in education, . . . we are deceived by quack educational devices as by quack medicine."

This "Report" constitutes a rewarding field for study, whether one agrees, or chooses the harder course of finding and defending a more excellent way, a task not easy of accomplishment. One lays this book down with the consciousness that it has said *enough*. It has lasting value. Don't overlook the "Bibliography"!

HARRY W. MCPHERSON

Executive Secretary of the Board of Education of The Methodist Church.

**A Certain Blind Man.** By ROBERT ELLIOT FITCH. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944. pp. xi-181. \$2.00.

As if neo-orthodoxy were not enough, the neo-Niebuhrists are now upon us! The formal dedication of this book is to the author's parents, but this is only a pious gesture. The real dedication, as proclaimed in the preface and abundantly demonstrated on almost every page thereafter, is "To Reinhold Niebuhr, chief of the prophets of the Lord in our time." Teachers of speech say that no one knows what his own voice really sounds like until he listens to it reproduced in a recording and played back on a phonograph. This book affords to Doctor Niebuhr a somewhat similar opportunity. Because of his brilliance of style, the charm of his personality, his love of paradoxes, and even the perversely cynical flavor in some things he says, qualities admirably fitted to the prevailing mood of today, Reinhold Niebuhr has achieved a vogue among younger men which will doubtless result in many books like the one we are now reviewing.

If all the neo-Niebuhrists acquire anything like Doctor Fitch's brilliance of style and capacity for wit and epigram, however, this will raise the interest level of controversial literature. The book has lots of clever things in it. Witness: "Mr. Hoover is our best living representative, in the twentieth century, of the eighteenth-century mind." (That may be a compliment, though not so intended.) Or again: "Religion may be an opiate for the powerful and prosperous, as well as for the poor." Or: "The real ethical problem is not to eliminate patriotism, but to control the ideals to which it is committed." Or: "There is a price for victory in peace, as for victory in war; and we must pay it."

But the book is not all on this high level of sanity and insight. It is dated by its acceptance of wartime attitudes and discredited in advance by its failure to discriminate between pacifists and isolationists and, worse yet, its inability to deal with pacifism objectively or fairly. What can we think of a book, for example, which insinuates that "Kagawa's last visit to the United States has sinister implica-

tions," and suggests that he was the tool of Japanese militarism to befuddle America? And why praise and promote universal military conscription for our youth, in one breath, and, in the next, advocate an international police force? Surely when we get such a world police force it will not be of such tremendous size as to require conscription!

ALBERT W. PALMER

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**Changing Emphases in American Preaching.** By ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1943. pp. 234. \$2.00.

This is a series of appreciations of the religious messages of five men who influenced the teaching of the American Protestant pulpit—Bushnell, Beecher, Moody, Gladden and Rauschenbusch. Professor Thompson sketches each of his subjects against the background of his time; gives significant incidents and sayings which make the man come alive; and dwells on the circumstances and events which shaped his Christian thinking. He is not concerned with the methods or style of his preaching or writing, but with the aspects of the gospel which he stressed.

Doctor Thompson writes delightfully, and one is sure that these lectures must have charmed his listeners, as in their expanded form they charm a reader. He has studied thoroughly both the memoirs of these men, their writings, what contemporaries thought and said of them; and has a wide and intimate knowledge of the American scene in which they lived. His book presents a survey of the shifting interests among Christian people over the last two thirds of the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth centuries, and of the "changing emphases" in the pulpit to meet these varying situations. He does not wholly agree with the views of any of his subjects, but he interprets each with the utmost fairness, only introducing an occasional brief criticism or dissent. Through his sincere admiration of the contribution these men have made, his readers are led to true appreciation of five commanding figures in American Christian thought.

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York.

**The Principles of Christian Ethics.** By ALBERT C. KNUDSON. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943. pp. 314. \$2.75.

Dean Knudson, over a period of many years, has laid students of religion under a heavy debt. It is not given to many scholars to write in the fields of history, theology, biblical criticism and mental and moral philosophy with authority and never-failing interest. Few, surely, even of the best, can have achieved such a many-sided development.

The present volume, as one might anticipate from its title, is concerned first with general principles and then with their practical application. Philosophers like Plato or Aristotle or Spinoza have probed very deeply into human conduct and its motivation but not within any limitations set by the adjective "Christian." The moral philosopher, *qua* philosopher, need feel under no obligation to urge the application of his discovered principles or to find any fault with those who may not think as he does. The Christian's field is narrower and his feeling of responsibility more tense. The Christian ideal differs from the Platonic or the Aristotelian not

only in ethical principles but in the desire for the wide dissemination of Christ's teaching and the changing of human life to bring it into accord.

Doctor Knudson begins with a short discussion of the distinction between Christian and philosophical ethics and of the history of moral emphases in Christianity. He then passes on to a more specific study of the Christian virtues as they relate to the individual, to the family, and to society at large. It is these latter which trouble the modern man. The "must" or "ought" of Christ for the individual is acknowledged by many who find it difficult to apply it to the family and the state. Doctor Knudson's chapter on "The State and War" is most helpful in our present distresses. He understands the Christian dilemma here, but he is no follower of the extreme pacifist. "The state as we have seen, is based on force. Its primary purpose is to defend itself and its citizens from unjust attack. This is the function of the army and the police; without such use of force the state would disintegrate and there would be anarchy." "Only on the assumption that the existence of the state is unnecessary and that the use of force is morally wrong could the contrary be maintained. . . . Jesus' principle of nonresistance, if taken literally, and applied both to the individual and to the state, would be anarchistic."

Doctor Knudson does not pass by the ethical difficulties of the economic order and the "ethic of power" which is creating such havoc at the present time. "An ethic of power is at bottom no ethic." "The only ethic that can permanently commend itself to the human spirit is an ideal ethic, an ethic of love and purity."

An excellent bibliography is appended.

H. A. KENT

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**The Rights of Man and Natural Law.** By JACQUES MARITAIN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943. pp. 119. \$1.50.

In two chapters the well-known French neo-Thomist philosopher develops his ideas about man in society, the first dealing with the general problems of a society of human persons, the second with the rights of the person. The short book has a very rich content and is written with the usual clarity and beauty, characteristic of all of Maritain's publications. The book is not an original work, neither in itself nor within the writings of the author. But it gives an excellent survey over the main ideas of what Maritain calls "political humanism" (50ff). In the first chapters the concepts of person, personality, society, freedom and others are defined in traditional scholastic terms and in a purely formalistic way. A sentence as: "An unjust law is not a law" (p. 11) can only be stated in a sphere of extreme abstraction, considering the fact that no positive law is free from injustice and that many valid laws contradict even the smallest amount of justice. Beyond definitions the first chapter contains fine remarks about the remaining significance of a modified idea of progress, and about a spiritually Catholic state over against a bourgeois liberalistic and communistic—or fascistic—totalitarian state. It is, however, not made evident how such a nonabsolutistic state could defend its own foundations without prohibiting the propagation of anti-Catholic religious or philosophical ideas, thus becoming authoritarian and somehow totalitarian itself. The second part defines the idea of natural law and elaborates three "tables of rights," "the rights of the human person as such," "the rights of the civic person" and "the



rights of the social person." The enumeration and classification of these rights is a significant contribution to our present attempts to create a new "bill of rights." This is true especially of the third group which is centered on the rights of "the working person." But just at this point a major question arises: Is it possible to deal with the "rights of man" in such a concrete way as Maritain does without interpreting them in the light of the concrete historical situation in its totality? In other words: Is it possible to state political principles without applying historical dialectics "to the situation for which they are used"? Is it meaningful to criticize, for instance, liberalism, communism, fascism, without showing the dialectical necessity of their rise and of the conflicts they have created from the point of view of the "unwritten" laws of human nature? Does not our historical consciousness separate us from Thomas as well as from Aristotle?

PAUL TILLICH

Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York.

**Rebuilding Our World.** By WILLARD L. SPERRY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. pp. xi-157. \$1.75.

This is a volume of sermons delivered by Dean Sperry to the students in Harvard Chapel. They deal with our broken wartime world and the task of reconstruction which must engage the present younger generation. Dean Sperry offers these sermons as an example of the type of preaching which he feels the present student generation needs. Dean Sperry expresses the hope that a new catholicity of spirit and a pioneering faith capable of creating a more real Christian unity is growing among students and this book seeks to cultivate such a growth.

The sermon, "Rebuilding Our World," which gives the book its title, is an interesting study of Nehemiah and his workers rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem with tools in one hand and a weapon in the other. It is timely, fresh and impressive. Other titles which follow are: "The Open Sea of Life," wherein inspiration is found in God for the great adventure of living beyond the small interests of self. "Religion's Two Worlds," a Palm Sunday message which calls men to hear the "trumpets sounding on the other side," since life includes earth and heaven. "A Sound Investment," "Learning to Speak Out," and "Repenting of Our Ignorance." The subjects invite our interest.

Dean Sperry's illustrations are drawn from current literature and possess warm, human interest. The written sermons reflect a pleasing literary style. The book concludes with a baccalaureate address delivered at Harvard in May, 1943, on the happily chosen text, "He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and the hearts of the sons to the fathers." (Malachi 4:6.)

ADIEL J. MONCRIEF

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**Intellectual America—Ideas on the March.** By OSCAR CARGILL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941. pp. 777. \$5.00.

This is a monumental and carefully wrought work in the field of literary criticism—but "Intellectual America" is too inclusive a title for it. The author begins by making a distinction between ideologies and philosophies, holding the former to be "cosmic storms of force" somewhat distinct from the more general



and inclusive idea which the word "philosophy" brings to mind—but mighty in their effect on man. The book is the author's endeavor to depict the ideologies which have carried the American intellectual mind along with them for many years.

Doctor Cargill's thesis is that the mind of intellectual America (which, it turns out, is the mind which creates and is created by the novels of the last half century) is itself the product of what he calls "invading forces" which came over from Europe. He dates the period between 1848 and 1865 as the origin of these invading forces—a time when the United States had internecine troubles of its own. The "forces" were basically, French Naturalism and Decadence, with Zola as high priest and prophet; German absolutism with Treitschke and Nietzsche putting their stamp ineffaceably on the Teutonic mind; and English Liberalism, which, according to the author, was not much of anything. These ideas—in the Cargill scheme of "ideodynamics"—seethed and simmered in the European cauldron until they boiled over to America—to be picked up eventually here by our own home-grown naturalists, decadents, primitivists, intelligentsia and Freudians—under which names as chapter heads the author classifies and discusses almost everyone who has written within the last seventy-five years.

To this reviewer, the most interesting part of the book was the author's evaluation of the foreign mind. He makes clear how French Liberalism cracked up under the influence of that curious type of atomized democracy which France unhappily produced. German absolutism, he says, is just about what we traditionally believe it to be. The whole blood and iron ideology which has been so terribly fastened in the soul of the Teuton is dramatically depicted here. Fichte and Hegel, and then Marx, who seems to have built on Hegel, are taken up with the tremendous "thus spoke Zarathustra" as a verbal back drop for all. In his study of the German mind the author is close to reality.

But with English liberalism he does not seem to be on such sure ground. It is not that Doctor Cargill does not properly evaluate the many British authors whose liberalism or lack of it he mentions; but one has a feeling that he too glibly explains in these pages, what anyone can see to be a vast complexity. Something is wrong when an author dismisses the whole mentality of Britain by saying: "England has had no first-rate mind in half a century to give her direction. Intellectually, she is a stagnant fen." Perhaps—but these same British people, minus the intellectual leadership which the author mentions, did, not many months ago, stand like a rock as the European world collapsed around them and Britain in her "darkest, grandest hour," just about saved present-day civilization.

When the author brings his book up to date for America, he simply starts a catalog of the writers who have been the vogue for these past twenty-five years. In this part of the volume the author is at his best and his book deserves a niche of its own for the concise and brilliant way in which he evaluates each of our present-day writers. But all his sharp pen picturing is a long way from what the book promised to be as it undertook to evaluate the ideologies which are presumably sweeping the American mind. Here is literary criticism, good literary criticism, realism if you please, but a total picture of the American mind, it is not.

For intellectual America is made up of far more ideologies than those comprehended by the disillusioned, the decadent, the dancers and the drunks of the Fitzgeralds and the Hemingways. If not, Studs Lonergan might be President and Sister Carrie, Madam, the Secretary of Labor. But fictional realism, while

real enough, is not complete in itself. As Paul Elmer More (whom Doctor Cargill gives short shrift in his book) said of Dreiser's *American Tragedy*, "It is a tragedy in an entirely different sense from what the author intended." The primitivists, the realists, the decadents, and so forth, have indeed influenced certain minds in America—a very intelligent segment of the American mind, for that matter. But so have Mickey Mouse, Dick Tracy and Superman influenced another segment of the American mind; not to speak of the mental inaninity of Harold Bell Wright and the saccharine vacuity of Temple Bailey, neither of whom, of course, get into the Cargill book. Keeping them out is certainly all right with this reviewer, but the point is that America is intellectually made up of much more than the work of a battery of publicized late writers. Where is philosophy with its various schools? Where is religion which undergirds so much of thought, as well as of action? Where are the radio commentators, the newspaper columnists, the script writers, the motion-picture moguls, and all others whose ideas and pronouncements combine to make that strange resultant which is the mentality of a nation? In a word, here is a book that blocked out one corner of our intellectual life for its study and did a "bang-up" job in covering that particular corner—but to consider that particular segment of reality as the whole of life would be a mistake.

*Intellectual America* is worth much, however, for its beautifully drawn analyses and complete evaluation of so very many of these modern writers. It ought to last as a reference work of authority in its particular field.

NOLAN B. HARMON, JR.

Book Editor of The Methodist Church, New York, New York.

**A Compend of Luther's Theology.** By HUGH THOMSON KERR, JR. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943. pp. xix-253. \$2.00.

The theology of the reformers has recently come again to wide attention among Protestant theologians. This is due to the influence of the thought of Barth, Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr, and others. The reformer's understanding of the Christian gospel which these leaders have presented afresh to the modern Christian mind is, indeed, a significant correction of the theologian and religious attitudes induced in the thinking of liberal Protestants by their concern for the tenets of modern civilization.

It is unfortunate that the major writings of Luther are not immediately accessible to the English-speaking world, especially those which contain his most characteristic and decisive religious ideas. A constructive and critical treatment of Luther's theology is one of the greatest demands of the present hour. Professor Kerr's *Compend of Luther's Theology*, which follows upon his recently published *Compend of Calvin's Institutes*, will satisfy this need only in part, although it may prove helpful to many who have become concerned about the thought of the reformers. It is to be regretted that Professor Kerr has made the selections for his book only from those works of Luther which are available in English translation. Had he taken the trouble of translating some of the Latin and German texts, especially parts of Luther's early Commentaries on the Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Hebrews, and had he used some of the sources which have inspired the modern Luther research, especially in Germany and Sweden, he would have furnished a more important source of information than his *Compend* is.

He has organized his material under the following heads: Revelation and the Bible; God; Jesus Christ; The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit; Man; The Christian Life; The Church; The Sacraments; Christian Ethics; The Christian State; and Eschatology.

For his purpose this was probably the best plan he could follow. However, the ordering of Luther's thought which is implied in it does not really accord with Luther's thinking as it actually was. While the reader of this *Compend* is given Luther's words on fundamental themes, he does not receive an impression of the dynamic which determined Luther's interpretation of the Christian faith. Luther's theology was a fighting theology, always set in contrast to Roman Catholicism, and in his later life, against the Protestant radicals. Of all this the reader of the *Compend* gets no direct impression.

It may be unjust to say that Professor Kerr has undertaken the preparation of this volume before he made himself thoroughly acquainted with the problems of Luther's theology. At any rate, this is my impression, for had he done so, his work would reflect the recent very profound Luther research.

My opinion is, then, that this *Compend* is a valuable elementary introduction to Luther's thought, but that a more thorough piece of work is required in order to make available to modern Christians the decisive and significant parts of his teachings. If a new edition of the *Compend* is ever issued, the statement of the foreword (p. vi), which calls Luther's words, "Here I stand," etc., "the classic reply of *Marburg*," should be corrected. Everyone knows that it was given at Worms. I also wonder whether Mr. Kerr is correct in calling the Weimar edition of Luther's works the "Kaiser" edition (p. vii).

WILHELM PAUCK

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**Contemporary Thinking About Jesus.** Compiled by THOMAS S. KEPLER.  
New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1944. pp. 429. \$3.50.

Knowledge comes out of the impact of mind upon mind.

In this volume scholars differing widely in faith, intellectual background, and nationality are brought together and placed side by side. Were all the chapters allowed to break out in sound we should hear a strange mixture of harmony and discord, agreement and disagreement. Herein is one of the chief values of the book. It gives us a taste of some major points of accord and cleavage among contemporary writers. The reader, therefore, has the immense advantage of feeling the impact of various minds upon his own.

We have here an introduction to the leading currents of ideas about the Gospels and Jesus. First, there is the tendency to affirm that we can draw a true picture of Jesus, though not a complete one, from a careful interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels. Second, regarding the Fourth Gospel, there is the tendency to agree with Clement of Alexandria that it is not so much a factual as "a spiritual gospel." Finally, a recurring thought is that Christianity is primarily power, the power of God released to men through Christ. Most biographies present many facts but few consequences. And this leads us to say with Matthew Arnold that Jesus is "far above the heads of His reporters," and with Major that He is "above the heads of His modern critics" (p. 29).

The sharpest cleavages occur in Part IV, "Eschatology and Ethics." Is the ethic of Jesus relevant to the affairs of this world? Were His commands intended only "for the last short span of time"? To these questions conflicting answers are given. How does the Christian relate the inner life to outward results? There is no systematic reply, but there are utterances on this topic that bear notice.

Niebuhr declares that the "prudential motive destroys the purity of ethical action." We may justly view the consequences of an act in retrospect, but if we view them in prospect "we have something less than the best" (p. 286). But there is no occasion to see consequences in retrospect unless we wish to foresee and control consequences to come. Want of compelling love and want of the prudence it demands—these corrupt our moral life. In a similar vein Brunner insists that ". . . morality is a matter of inner life and not of outward behavior" (p. 255). But these two things, separable in thought, are wedded in fact. What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.

MACK B. STOKES

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**The Short Story of Jesus.** By WALTER LOWRIE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943. pp. xv-238. \$2.50.

*The Short Story of Jesus* was written out of a rich overflow. As one reads it the impression grows that there is more goods in the author's stockroom than he has put on his shelves. Because the title claims that a short story is to be told, it does not follow that it is a superficial writing. This is not a life of Jesus such as Dickens wrote for his children.

Doctor Lowrie states that he is writing for the people. This reviewer is not sure which group of people is intended. The book is too academic (in spite of the author's claim that it is to be a popular work) for the average church member. Students reading it would require considerable background in New Testament study to appreciate the points of view expressed, and the more expert reader would not welcome the lack of argument for conclusions, stated as facts, in disputed areas. There are no footnotes; Schweitzer and Kierkegaard alone are quoted. It is not to be concluded that Doctor Lowrie is unfamiliar with the field. It is the assignment which he has given himself ("I have developed a passion for abbreviation," he says) which has created the problem. The book constantly suggests condensation rather than a short composition.

Doctor Lowrie follows Albert Schweitzer in his apocalyptic interpretation of Jesus, who claimed "a mysterious solidarity with the Son of Man." Interim ethics are here in such extreme form as would regard Jesus' reference to the birds and flowers as "an incitement to reckless, eschatological living." Yet when Jesus stops to caress little children He acts "as if the world were to go on forever."

The Marcan order is accepted at its face value except for the doublet involving the feedings of the multitude with the subsequent journeys into the north country. The positions of the Caesarea Philippi and the Transfiguration incidents are reversed.

It is refreshing to find one who is still unwilling to give up the attempt to weave the Synoptic Gospel materials into a story indicating motivation, a succession of events, and development in Jesus' experience. And yet Doctor Lowrie will find difficulty in securing a following in a day of form-critic readers with such

specific suggestions as that Jesus spent five months in the north country, twelve days en route from this region to Jerusalem, and only three days in the Holy City prior to His crucifixion. The connections between the units of the tradition will hardly permit such sharply drawn conclusions.

CHARLES M. LAYMON

Scarritt College, Nashville, Tennessee.

**Date With Destiny.** By RALPH W. SOCKMAN. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944. pp. 157. \$1.50.

This book consists of the Fondren Lectures given at Southern Methodist University in 1943 under the title "Religion's Third Front." A friend had suggested the Preamble of our Federal Constitution and that Doctor Sockman fill in the clauses with his interpretation. His foreword indicates the pattern in that the war is changing the conditions of living but not the goals of life or the patterns of personality. At once he plunges into the conditioning of the war, reporting the remark from a chaplain declaring there will be at least eight million fatalists in the United States after the war. Over against this blight is what he calls "an inner resilience that is decisive." We are "workers together with Him." He warns us we must not strain tokens of the dawning nor assume that "every crash of defeat is the crack of doom." He calls in to reinforce the spiritual interpretation of life, Hocking, Mann and Sorokin, saying history was the enemy that at last destroyed Mussolini, buttressed by Lincoln's "We cannot escape history."

A very strong chapter is "We, the People of the United States." He takes Churchill's remark at Harvard, September 6, 1943, as his springboard. That is, "in many ways the leading community in the civilized world." He notes Lowell's reply to Guizot as to how long the American Republic would endure. Said he, "It will last as long as the ideas of the men who founded it continue dominant." It is the "air about him" that marks a gentleman; it is real friends of Jesus that make the Church; it is reality and truth that make Americans. The cult of publicity and propaganda has victimized us. We now know what deadly results can come from determined wicked minorities such as Nazi, Fascist and military. Do we care enough to be creative? We are warned that racialism in Europe has a foothold in America as seen in Harlem and Detroit. Anti-Semitism is just now a danger signal among us.

"To get ahead in life" is too much accepted as a worthy goal. Our discussion of "the century of the common man" looks to a better day, indeed to the genius of America. "But what can one insignificant person do about it?" is the frequent helpless question. Hear this: "In war we people put our shoulders to the wheel; in peace, we shrug our shoulders."

The chapter "Form a More Perfect Union" is incisive and rewarding. He considers the cleavage of the colonies as between states. Ours is social, economic classes and racial groups. Alas! we have but banked the fires of racial feelings during the war; again the same is true of capital and labor. What will come of the smoldering passions afterwards? We require something regenerative. "Something new must be hatched." "Ye must be born again" is a desperate need. A French businessman asked in 1937: "Can our democracies generate a fervor and devotion in their youth comparable to that which the dictatorships have kindled in their young devotees?" Doctor Sockman traces the disillusion of American



youth who were promised a new and warless world. "Then began the era of self-indulgence camouflaged as self-expression. From the ranks of regimentation they swung to rampant individualism. With their loosened loyalties, emancipated youth became as atomistic as a sand pile."

He traces recent quests of union in Communism, Fascism, Nazism. He reminds us that in the breakup of the Roman Empire the Christian Church became the bond of union. That persisted for fourteen centuries. What now? He treats "religion's third front." The first front being that of personal evangelism. The second line is commonly called the "social gospel." The third front is the control of the cultural atmosphere. We must come to feel that "in Him we live and move and have our being." The New York Conference on Science, Religion and Philosophy in 1940 said: "If the malady which has produced the present disaster has its roots in every aspect of our intellectual and spiritual experience, the remedy for that malady likewise requires the co-ordination of vast fields of human experience beyond military, political and economic interests."

CLARENCE W. KEMPER

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**Son of Man and Kingdom of God.** By HENRY BURTON SHARMAN. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943. pp. 149. \$2.50.

The purpose of Doctor Sharman's book is to determine by literary criticism the hypothesis that the Son of Man and Kingdom of God are never associated in the historical situation which lies behind the Synoptic Gospels. "The Son of Man has no kingdom and the Kingdom of God has no Son of Man" (p. 89). He compares not the Synoptic Gospels but their sources, Mark and what he designates as "Non-Mark" (which most students call Q). On the basis of literary criticism alone, he finds that "Son of Man" is a term never used by Jesus of Himself; it is a phrase carrying into the Gospels a later interpretation of Jesus made by the early Church. As for the Kingdom, it is not eschatological or apocalyptic but timeless: "He that doeth the will of God entereth into the Kingdom of God" (p. 138). But is literary criticism enough? And should not more attention have been paid to work done by other scholars in this field? It is possible that the limited range the author set for his study increases the fire-power of his conclusions.

One duty of anyone writing a book subtitled "A Critical Study," indeed of anyone writing a book, is to be clear. In this duty Doctor Sharman has not altogether succeeded. Perhaps the most striking example of muggy style is to be found on p. 125: "Probably it may hardly be maintained with high confidence that Jesus could not possibly have been possessed by any concept of the Kingdom of God at once so elemental, so simple, and yet so profound that the question of *When* is wholly irrelevant—dictated solely by known contemporary concepts which had gradually submerged and finally abandoned completely the underlying and genetic content of the term Kingdom of God." And expressions such as, "it may perhaps reasonably be regarded as legitimate to wonder" (p. 102) are too frequent. They draw the reader's attention away from the main points of Doctor Sharman's argument, which is simple and generally convincing.

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**The Beginning of Christianity.** By CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943. pp. 366. \$2.75.

**One God, One World.** By CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1942. pp. viii-72. 75¢.

Professor Craig, of Oberlin, has laid hold of an admirable idea, which he has worked out with great ability and success. He feels that in most attempts to explain the Christian message the point of view is too much doctrinal or philosophical. Christianity is a historical religion, and its message cannot be abstracted from its history. The best way of understanding it is to study the facts of its origin, and to trace out, from the earliest records, the process by which it integrated itself with the life of the world. Doctor Craig thus makes it his aim to present the facts, in the fullest light now afforded us by modern scholarship, and leave them to convey their own disclosure of the inner meaning of the gospel. He begins with a survey of the time and circumstances in which the new religion arose. Then he examines the work of Jesus in its relation to the various interests of that age. He then describes how the Church came into being, how it expanded, how it made its way into the Gentile world and adapted its message to new conditions of thought and living. The different types of New Testament teaching are analyzed, but always with reference to the concrete situation in which the Church found itself from time to time. It is obvious that in a study of this kind everything depends on the objectivity of the treatment. An author may put his own prejudices into a statement of facts just as much as into an argument, and most histories of the early Church are propaganda in an indirect form. The great merit of the present book is its fair-mindedness. Doctor Craig has views of his own, and does not hesitate, on a proper occasion, to assert them; but he is careful everywhere to keep his own shadow off the picture, and to show the Church of the first century as it really was. His book has other conspicuous merits. It is wonderfully comprehensive, and deals within its short compass, with almost every important question relating to the New Testament and the early Church. It is well written and arranged, so that the reader can make his way with sustained interest through the wilderness of facts. It is full of illuminating suggestions, thrown out, for the most part, incidentally; *e. g.*, on the nature of the primitive "communism," on the two accounts of the council at Jerusalem, on the absence of the idea of repentance in the teaching of Paul. Where the book lies open to criticism is in its main thesis that the gospel may be interpreted simply by watching it in action. It may be argued that some understanding of the message of Jesus and some inward response to it must precede the knowledge of the outward events. The revelation, as Paul insisted, is "from faith to faith," and he seems here to lay his finger on the weakness of the historical method. For the understanding of Christianity something more is needed than an impartial study of its origins, but this also is necessary, and has never been more ably exercised than in this book.

*One God, One World* is one of a series of short books intended to guide the minds of ordinary Christian people in the great task which now lies before them of building a new world out of that old one which is now very much in the condition of a bombed city. It is obvious, even to the most unreflecting, that the task cannot be attempted without the aid of religion, and the nature of this aid needs to be thoroughly understood. Doctor Craig has shown in this excellent little book, that the idea of the oneness of humanity lies at the heart of the Chris-

tian religion, although most professing Christians are polytheists in all but name. In this book, as in his larger one, Doctor Craig takes his stand on facts. Instead of talking at large about human brotherhood he examines the Bible teaching, first in the Old Testament, then in the sayings and parables of Jesus, then in the later New Testament writings, and shows that it all revolves on the two poles of the unity of God and the unity of mankind. Behind all his pleading for unity there lies the conviction that it cannot be achieved by any merely political or social devices. Men can never become one unless they acknowledge the same God, and are inwardly conformed to the same divine law. To anyone who cares to look beneath the surface of things a book like this has more practical value than any of the treatises on postwar planning which fill the shop windows at present.

E. F. SCOTT

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**The Vitality of the Christian Tradition.** Edited by GEORGE F. THOMAS.  
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944. pp. xi-358. \$3.00.

Twelve Fellows of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education have dipped their pens in the ink of their common liberalism to phrase the major insights and values of the Christian tradition. The first half of the volume traces the growth of Christian ideas from their rootage in Israel to the present day. The latter part deals with the problems created by the reaction against them in the modern world, treating in order the relations of the Christian tradition to modern culture, philosophy, physical science, psychology, ethical thought, and democracy.

The essays, all of high order, possess two merits in particular. For one thing, they are positive. Each paper endeavors to get at the kernel of the matter without spending too much time cracking the shell of the outmoded dogma in which it happens to be encased. The emphasis is not on what we must discard but on what we may keep. Secondly, they avoid the intellectualistic fallacy, so often identified with liberalism, which assumes that if a position can be shown to be rational it is thereby real—that is, able to lay hold of men's affections and aspirations and to become an operative force in the life of humanity. These essayists know, as John Dewey once put it, that all too often "while saints"—philosophers and theologians—"are engaged in introspection burly sinners run the world." The religionist's work is not done until he has translated his metaphysical insights into moral power. Hence, Amos Wilder suggests in his excellent paper a strategy for restoring the Bible to a place of influence, and Douglas Steere gives us a remarkable chapter on the way we may introduce our generation to the devotional classics of Christianity—the "literature of power."

One wonders, of course, at some omissions: why in a book devoted to stating the major insights of Christianity so little is said about the theological significance of Jesus; why so much space is given to Christianity's past achievements and present problems and nothing about its future prospects (after all, vital Christianity has always had a philosophy of the future); why a chapter is devoted to the Protestant Reformation and so little made of the movement toward church unity, which seeks to join together again what the Reformation unhappily rent asunder; why the bearing of Christianity on our economic order—which is surely as important as the relation to contemporary psychology—is not treated.

The liberal, symposiac approach, of which we have a good sample here, represents a new tactic in Christian apologetics. Instead of the older attempt to defend the faith by a solid bastion of dogma or a chain of syllogistic fortifications, we have a "defense in depth"—a group of "strong points," independently defended, capable of deadly cross-fire, able to concede much without being overwhelmed. We believe it will prove as effective in its way against the onslaughts of irreligion as a similar type of defense has been on the fields of battle.

F. GERALD ENSLEY

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**The Thrill of Tradition.** By JAMES MOFFATT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944. pp. xi-201. \$2.00.

The Protean word "tradition" does not suggest a single unifying idea around which to build a series of lectures. It will perhaps arouse no "thrill" in many a person who happens to see Doctor Moffatt's title. The reader, however, will find a thrill in his discussion and will come to a clearer and more vivid conception of historical values. From the selection of pertinent quotations with which the small volume begins to the too-meager notes at its end, it is marked by an unusual abundance of the epigrammatic sayings and the illustrative allusions drawn from a wide range of reading which mark Doctor Moffatt's writings.

The book begins with a discussion of *paradosis* and *tradition* in classical writers as usually meaning oral teaching, or *instruction*, including thus both method and content. Eventually it came to mean "something laid down, something with binding force." The many uses of the word, and the thing, as they came into the hands of the Christians and the many controversies, between Catholics and Protestants, between conservatives and progressives, are traced in broad outlines. This prepares for the discussion, in the last two chapters, of the values of "authentic tradition" and of the relation of tradition to history and to progress.

For Doctor Moffatt, "genuine," or "authentic" tradition is "funded experience" of the past which can "be made available to meet the mental and moral costs of the Christian enterprise." Artificial traditions, meaningless traditions, and, above all, pretended traditions fabricated to maintain the *status quo* are among the besetting and unforgivable sins of pious men. The test of genuine tradition "lies in its capacity to generate a zest for life which produces the authentic throb or thrill." This applies to concrete traditions imbedded in the habits of continuous and common life and, "above all, in the texture of religious communities." It applies also to the somewhat different kind of tradition discovered and rehabilitated by historical research and archaeological discovery. The ultimate test is, "Does the tradition inspire the worshipers?"

Objection to this too-simple criterion is obvious. There are other standards besides emotion. However, if other portions of Doctor Moffatt's discussion are duly considered, it is perfectly clear that he is far from belittling science, philosophy, or ethics. What he seeks to do is to suggest how valueless tradition may be discarded and that which is priceless may be saved from thoughtless iconoclasm.

C. C. McCOWN

Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California.

**Amen, Amen.** By S. A. CONSTANTINO, JR. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944. pp. 184. \$2.00.

Here is a bit of popularly philosophical writing as compact and meaty and palatable as a hazelnut. With breezy unconventionality, combining sincerity with vigor, a young naval officer talks to his generation in terms that they can all understand. It is the argumentative give-and-take of the barrack room or the street corner, with up-to-the-minute illustrations like Pepsi-Cola and Benny Goodman and jeeps. Theologians will feel that it is a bit of oversimplification to dismiss in a few pages such major subjects as the nature of God or the immortality of the soul. With a blunt but good-humored cocksureness, the author says, "There, you know enough about that—let's get on!" But the point is that he does get on, right into the things that matter in today's living, moral standards, sex, and money, as well as religion in general and God in particular. One can only hope that this same sound logic and penetrating style will shortly come to grips with alcoholism and the liquor traffic, about the only major segment of modern society that is not at least brushed over in this brief book. Not all of it is a brushing over, either. He digs deeply and factually into some of the unsavory corners of experience. You won't like it all, you won't agree with it all. But you will surely acknowledge that this young man has tried with remarkable success to say something that badly needs saying to his contemporaries and to older folks as well. More power to his pen!

ROBBINS W. BARSTOW

The Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut.

**Joseph Charles Price—Educator and Race Leader.** By WILLIAM JACOB WALLS. Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1943. pp. xx-568. \$3.00

Bishop William J. Walls, of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, has performed a distinct service in writing an inspiring story of the life of Joseph Charles Price, preacher, orator, and founder and president of Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina.

Measured by the calendar, the life of Joseph Charles Price was brief. He died at the age of thirty-nine. Measured by achievements, his life was rich, full and fruitful. He lived and labored during a very interesting period in the history of the Negro race. Freedmen were treading with uncertain steps along the difficult path which led from servitude to service, from the status of freedmen to free men.

He was second in course of time of a great triumvirate of Negro leaders; the other two being Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington. He came to maturity when Douglass was retiring from leadership, and Booker T. Washington had not yet become nationally known.

Bishop Walls was fortunate in having had access to abundant material which he used skillfully in writing the biography of Price and in interpreting the times in which he lived. The author's comments on the philosophies and activities of Negro leaders who were contemporaries of Price contribute to the value of the book.

For example, in comparing Doctor Price with Booker T. Washington, the author states: "Both Doctor Price and Doctor Washington started where they found the race situation. They only differ in the distance of their outlook. Washington had the urgency of immediacy. Price worked for immediacy and looked

to the ultimate. Both believed in the sense of justice in the American heart, but Washington started as utilitarian and became a prophet as he grew, whereas Price was a prophet and became a utilitarian as he made progress. Washington discovered God in the social process; Price, like some Hebrew seer, found Him as an inner light in social experience. But without doubt, both arrived before Jehovah's throne by different routes; and they twain won immortality."

Joseph Charles Price had an unusual capacity for winning and holding friends. He was especially successful in raising funds for Livingstone. In his triumphant tour through England he raised more than \$10,000. Had he lived, doubtless Livingstone College would have become in its early history one of the best-endowed educational institutions for Negroes. Probably he will be longest remembered as an orator and preacher. The book contains numerous references to his oratorical triumphs in America and in England.

Walter Hines Page, distinguished diplomat and man of letters, who had heard Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington and Price speak, described them in this way: "Frederick Douglass was the orator with power, argumentative, convincing and sublime. Booker T. Washington was the businessman in expression—simple, earnest, practical and persuasive. But when Price spoke, he struck fire and threw you into the heroic mood."

Price, however, was more than a mere orator. As the author writes: "Joseph Charles Price was a friend of man and the world. He gave his life for truth, freedom, justice, prosperity and equitable sharing in the good life for his and all races. Would you understand his growing favor with posterity? He served. The secret of his power? He loved."

The introduction to the book was written by the Hon. Josephus Daniels, a life-long friend of President Price.

M. S. DAVAGE

President, Clark University, Atlanta, Georgia.

**From Victory to Peace.** By PAUL HUTCHINSON. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company, 1943. pp. ix-226. \$1.50.

Fearing that the governments are drifting toward a bad peace which will be the prelude to another and more terrible war, the Managing Editor of the *Christian Century* calls upon the Christian leaders to speak with prophetic voice concerning the forces that militate against the future security of the world. He believes it to be the distinctive function of the Church to speak in behalf of moral law in the hope that men of good will will rally to the high standard. "In discharging such a function it will have no concern with the expediences which pass as political realism. Its sole responsibility is to proclaim what should be; it is content to believe that its Lord, who is the Lord of history, will see to it that what should be eventually becomes what must be and then what is."

The main body of Mr. Hutchinson's interesting book is an analysis of several pronouncements by responsible groups in Allied countries: "Proposals of Protestant and Roman Catholic Leaders of Great Britain," "The Malvern Manifesto," "A Message From the National Study Conference on the Churches and a Just and Durable Peace" (Delaware). "The Six Pillars of Peace," "A Christian Message on World Order From the International Round Table of Christian Leaders"



(Princeton). "A Declaration on World Peace," made by American Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders. The author believes that the clearest, most courageous and Christian utterance was that of the Delaware Conference. This pronouncement he hails and defends with great enthusiasm.

Whether the reader agrees in whole or in part, he will have no difficulty in understanding the author's views—general disarmament, the end of imperialism, no pronouncement of war guilt, no attempt to punish individual German or Japanese leaders, the end of all forms of race discrimination, surrender of absolute national sovereignty in the interest of an international organization for the preservation of peace.

The author does not have a very strong faith in the political leadership of any of the Allied nations. His hope is in the Christian prophet. "These pages are written in the profound conviction that, if the Christian Church recovers and discharges its prophetic function in relation to man's search for a better order, the very disillusionments produced by the war and by the failure of secular processes will serve to make men newly conscious of the Church as the custodian of an eternal wisdom."

WALTER POPE BINNS

William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri.

**Liberal Education.** By MARK VAN DOREN. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1943. pp. xi-186. \$2.50.

Probably the best written among contemporary books about college, Mark Van Doren's *Liberal Education* approaches its subject from its basis in ethics rather than from any concern for the professional prejudices or the rights of established institutions. Here many of the central disputes of the age are properly placed, their resolution being necessary to any clear analysis of learning. How does a youth become a person? How are science and the arts related? Is the past "a rival of the present"? Who should be educated? Who is eligible for freedom? How is religion related to learning?

In his answer Mr. Van Doren speaks many home truths: personality is the degree of virtue in a man and thus the important distinctions between men lie in the extent to which each exemplifies the virtues available to all. This being true, education sets about to study not primarily the peculiarities of men but their common possession of manhood in order to bring the student to acquire as much of his inheritance as possible. Of science and the arts: the arts of language and science are equally and mutually humane; of the past: "The educated person recognizes no dry stretch between now and then. They are one river, and the more he knows about its length the better. He is a citizen of his age; but if he is a good citizen he studies the oldest laws as well as yesterday's statutes." The old question, "How many educated persons should there be?" Mr. Van Doren turns around to: "How many can there be?" Education being growth in manhood, all are thought potentially able to enter into it. Mr. Van Doren holds that men's eccentricities belong to their sleep and dreams, their daylight achievements they possess in common together. These daylight achievements are manhood itself. It is with these, and not the eccentricities, that education is concerned. It is these daylight achievements that make their possessor free.

On the subject of religion and education Mr. Van Doren makes some un-



pleasant observations about the twentieth century. "Democracy seems to be the only heir of religion," he says, "and the only existing agent of its educational function." "Democracy," he says, "is our only educator possessing full authority." When he delivered the Terry Lectures (*Education at the Crossroads*: Yale) it was not necessary for Jacques Maritain, a Roman Catholic, to make such an admission; speaking for the citizens of the American university world, however, Mr. Van Doren is evidently obliged to do so.

Later in his book Mr. Van Doren attempts to say what ought to be the relation of education to religion, and he states: "Liberal education is not responsible to religion. It never created one, and so, if another is needed now, liberal education will not be its source." These sentences make sense only if, in fact, a new religion is needed. If a new religion is not needed, the question of whether or not education is responsible to religion would surely turn upon whether or not education had flourished in the past when it was responsible to religion, or whether or not it had flourished better in those periods when it was not responsible.

Mr. Van Doren makes it perfectly clear throughout this lucid book that he regards man as neither an angel nor an animal but a man, and, I judge, a man with a soul. Quite properly he devotes his whole discussion to this earth and this life we live—"Liberal education is occupied with the nature of things, and chiefly with the nature of man." In spite of his diffidence toward religion, he observes over and over again the upper edge of man's consciousness. It is refreshing to read a contemporary book which takes such general account of the mystery which pervades our own nature and what and how we learn. So thorough is Mr. Van Doren's sense of the mystery in his subject that in the preliminary chapters he implies, at least, some responsibility of education to religion: from Pascal he borrows the phrase, "to believe, and to doubt well." "That is at least a program," says Mr. Van Doren, "for the person whose perfection we have in mind as the aim of education."

Those who have already made up their minds that they do not like St. John's College will avoid this book when they are told that it lists with approbation the one hundred ten best books in the St. John's curriculum. Technical questions of teaching and organizing classes to one side, and the practical problem of learning in college the foreign languages, mathematics, and English which should have been learned in secondary school, what Mr. Van Doren has to say about classics, their common, nontechnical vocabulary, and their readability as well as their worth is all sound good sense. So, also, is his reasoning that liberal education "is not technical enough in its own way" and his demand, in the liberal arts, for "intellectual precision."

*Liberal Education* puts the discussion of college and its postwar curriculum where it belongs—right in the center of an urbane inquiry into our own nature, what is available to us as sensitive and thinking men, and how, in the midst of responsibility and change, all may assist in tempering the change for themselves and their fellows, may find a place where they may become at once free and to a degree secure. This refreshing book, for all its strictness and learning, makes it clear that education may proceed—has succeeded, indeed—unassisted by curricula, class schedules, and a profession.

GORDON KEITH CHALMERS

Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio.

**Documents of the Christian Church.** Selected and edited by Henry Bettenson. Oxford University. 95¢. No well-balanced library can afford to be without this valuable collection of the the most important records of the History of the Christian Church.

**This Created World.** By Theodore Parker Ferris. Harper. \$1.25. More important than the tangible things are the "activity and purpose of God. The personal life of man and the work of Jesus Christ."

**God's Dreams.** By Thomas Curtis Clark. Willett, Clark. \$2.00. Poems by an author who needs no introduction.

**Echoes From the Quiet Corner.** By Patience Strong. Dutton. 50¢. Rhyme and wisdom in the tune of "The Quiet Corner."

**Jesus Christ the Teacher.** By W. A. Curtis. Oxford. 32 sh. A study of His method and message, based mainly on the earlier Gospels.

**Know Your Bible Series.** By Roy L. Smith. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 25¢ each. Study No. 1, How Your Bible Grew Up. Study No. 2, The Bible and the First World State. Study No. 3, Writing Scripture Under Dictators. Study No. 4, Refugees Who Wrote Scripture.

**Religion and Issues of Life.** By Eugene W. Lyman. Association Press. \$1.00. A study of religion with respect to its four dimensions: truth, worship, ethics and philosophy.

**Life's Unanswered Questions.** By Harold Cooke Phillips. Harper. \$1.50. Timely sermons on timeless questions.

**Frederick Bohn Fisher, World Citizen.** By Welthy Honsinger Fisher. Macmillan. \$2.50. A biographical work of a Methodist Bishop by his wife, a co-"world citizen"!

**A Man Stood Up to Preach.** By Edgar DeWitt Jones. Bethany. \$2.00. Sermons with a message!

**The Problem of Ezekiel.** By William A. Irwin. University of Chicago Press. \$3.00. A dissertation on the ancient prophet.

**Et Cetera.** By Louis Paul Kirby. Meador. \$2.00. A thought-provoking discussion of the conditions under which the nations must begin their plans for a lasting peace.

**Church, State and Letters.** By F. Brompton Harvey. Epworth. 6 sh. A series of essays on many facets of these three subjects from a Methodist point of view.

**The Pioneering Church Series.** Association Press. 75¢ each. "God and the Day's Work," by Robert Lowry Calhoun, and "To Glorify God," by Campbell-Nichols-Alter.

**The Romance of the Ministry.** By Raymond Calkins. Pilgrim Press. \$2.00. An inspirational guide and practical ministerial manual enhanced by a wealth of illustrative material.

**The Founders.** By Merritt Clare Batchelder. American University. A historical pageant commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the incorporation of the American University.

**The Legacy of the Liberal Spirit.** By Fred G. Bratton. Scribner's. \$2.75. Men and movements behind our modern thinking.

**Henry W. Grady.** By Raymond B. Nixon. Knopf. \$4.00. A stirring biography of the "Spokesman of the New South."

**A Guide for a Man and Woman Looking Toward Marriage.** By Roy A. Burkhardt. Hearthside. 50¢. Counsel for young people and guide for those who would guide.